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The New York Times The Internet's image problem 8-page supplement

Israel's queen of the night Arts & Entertainment, Page 5

Beyond hatred Page 7

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Knesset to debate conversion bill today

By LIAT COLLINS and HAIM SHAPIRO Barring a last-minute compromise, the Knesset is expected today to hear the first reading of the conversion bill, which would restrict recognition for conversions to Judaism in Israel to those approved by the Chief Rabbinate.



Marchers mark Land Day in Jaffa yesterday. In general, the day passed without major incident. (Ilan Ossendyver/Israel Sun)

PM: Peace in 'virtual collapse'

Arab FMs call for halt to normalization

By Jerusalem Post Staff and news agencies Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday the Palestinian Authority's approval of terrorism against Israel has brought the peace process to a state of "virtual collapse."

Uproar over officer's slur against Ethiopian soldier

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN, LIAT COLLINS, and Haim The Prime Minister's Office, Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg, leaders of the Ethiopian Jewish community, MKs, and others were up in arms yesterday over a report that an IDF major had barred an Ethiopian-born soldier from an army clinic.

Politicians target end to direct elections

By SARAH HONIG A number of prominent Likud and Labor Party figures yesterday announced the formation of an extra-parliamentary group that will work to repeal the law for the direct election of the prime minister.

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ILAN NITZAN FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES ISRAEL FOUNDATION FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN JOINT FUND-RAISING DAY APRIL 1ST 1997

Vertical text on the left edge of the page, including 'The Jerusalem Post' and various small notices.

'We can't ignore our identity'

Israeli Arabs blast Har Homa on Land Day

By DAVID RUDGE

The gray monument at the entrance to the cemetery in Sakhnin in the Galilee is designed to depict the struggle of Israeli Arabs to protect their land.

The inscriptions in Hebrew and English read simply: "In memory of those who fell on Land Day." The Arabic is somewhat more descriptive.

"It says that they died so that we can live, and that their spirit lives on," said Leithey Ghanaiyim, reading the memorial for the six Israeli Arabs - three of them from Sakhnin - who died in clashes with security forces in the demonstrations in 1976 against the expropriation of 20,000 dunams of land in the Galilee.

The annual commemoration of the day has usually passed relatively quietly, as it did yesterday - despite the general strike declared by

the Arab leadership and fears that violence in the territories might spill across the Green Line.

The decision to call a general strike was primarily a protest against the government's "settlement policies," which Arab politicians and council heads have charged are threatening the peace process.

"We are loyal citizens of the state, but we are also part of the Palestinian people and we cannot deny our identity nor our nationality," said Ghanaiyim.

"We fully support the peace process, but the building by the government at Har Homa and its attempts to separate the territories from Jerusalem by building towns around Jerusalem is totally unacceptable to us.

"At the same time, as Arab citizens we are still being discriminated against. I don't just relate to what's happening at Har Homa, but here in my hometown Sakhnin and what we

have compared to our neighbors in Misgav and Karmiel. There's no comparison," he said.

His comments were echoed by father of eight Ahmed Khaleileh, who works for the Sakhnin Municipality. "In a town with a population of 21,000 people, we have a municipality housed in a rented building and offices in prefabricated huts," said Khaleileh.

"The municipality has put forward plans to widen the main road that runs through the town and improve safety by erecting barriers and widening the sidewalks, but there's no money for this," he added.

"Despite all this, however, we feel we are an integral part of the state. When the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin came to visit he said he felt safer in Sakhnin than in Tel Aviv. Unfortunately he was right," Khaleileh said. "When he was assassinated we cried. We felt more Israeli than some Israelis."



Eisenberg laid to rest

The family of Shoul Eisenberg leads the procession at his burial in Savyon Cemetery yesterday. Eisenberg Finance Minister Dan Meridor eulogized Eisenberg on behalf of the government. "Eisenberg made Israel the base of his activity and in so doing made a critical contribution to the Israeli economy and to opening markets we had not known before," Meridor said. (Dana Stern/Israel Sun)

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Quiet day in Rahat

By HERB KEINON

Carrying three Palestinian flags and singing the Palestinian anthem, a group of some 50 protesters walked past stores and offices shuttered by a strike in Rahat yesterday. They marched to the city's central park, where they held an impromptu Land Day rally.

The majority of the protesters were students from Ben-Gurion University in Beersheba, not Rahat residents.

City manager Salam Alatika bristled at the classification of Rahat as a Beduin city. "We are all Arabs," he said. "We are Palestinians. We are Israeli Arabs, but we are Palestinians."

Alatika said that unlike previous years, this Land Day was marked by a nearly complete strike.

"Because of the tension in the

territories, people decided to strike and identify with their brethren," Alatika said.

A municipal worker who would only identify himself as Mahmoud said there is a great deal of bitterness in Rahat.

"The conditions here are dreadful," he said. "If a Jew needs a home, he will pitch a tent in front of the Knesset, and in a matter of days his living conditions will be taken care of. We have pitched a tent for 40 years, and nothing has moved."

Deputy mayor Talil Ranawi, who organized five buses to take Rahat residents to the central Land Day Negev ceremony at a Beduin encampment north of Dimona, said one of the reasons there was no trouble was because Rahat officials made an agreement with the police that they would control the town, if the police did not enter.

Peaceful demo in Jaffa

By RAINE MARCUS

Only a few hundred Jaffa residents participated in a brief Land Day procession yesterday, which passed quietly.

By 2:30 p.m. Jaffa's streets were nearly empty, with most offices and stores closed and only a few bakeries and restaurants remaining open. Most residents seemed to have stayed home.

The police adopted a low-profile policy, with senior officers convening out of sight in the Jaffa station and officers on scooters and in vans strategically deployed around the area. On Rehov Shivtei Yisrael two policemen were stationed every 200 meters; but in nearby alleys, larger forces gathered in case of violence, ready to arrive within minutes. Their riot equipment proved unnecessary.

Apparently, dialogue among police, Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo, and Jaffa's leaders helped. Residents equipped with walkie-talkies were deployed along Rehov Yefet, the main street, to ensure the procession passed peacefully.

Shosh, a Jewish resident, said she hoped the police would not provoke confrontations. "Usually massive forces of violent Border Police ignite the residents here," she said.

Waving green Islamic Movement flags, the procession made its way down Rehov Yefet, as participants chanted Arabic slogans; mostly concerning Land Day, but some expressing more extreme political opinions. "Return Har Homa to its owners, and not to Bibi and his dogs," was one chant heard.



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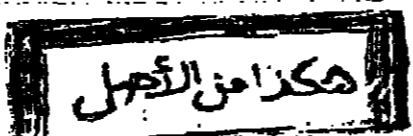
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Officer: Slur was joke

By ARISH O'SULLIVAN

The commander of the brigade whose Maj. Michael Valitzkin called an Ethiopian soldier seeking medical aid a racial slur, said it was a grave, but isolated, incident that does not reflect the true sentiments toward minorities in the IDF.

"The moment I heard of the incident I decided to try the officer," said Col. Nitzan, head of the Hermon Brigade. "But the incident occurred three months ago and I dealt with it. Only now it's being linked with other matters."

The colonel was referring to reports last week of three suicides by Ethiopian soldiers in one month, allegedly because they were mistreated or subjected to racism. In

this case, Valitzkin insists the incident involving his racial insult to Ethiopian-born soldier Avi Afemare was all a joke, Nitzan said.

"The officer claimed to me that he and the Ethiopian soldier were buddies and that he had taken him under his wing in the brigade. He made sure he was fed and sat with him over coffee. In the framework of this friendship, they developed a sort of black humor. He said he said the things in jest without any intention to harm the soldier."

"None of this was acceptable to me and I decided to punish him with a reprimand," Nitzan said. He defended his punishment, saying it was a serious blow to the major's record and that the only alternative was to dismiss him. He also said

Valitzkin deeply regretted the incident.

Nitzan said Valitzkin told him Afemare would call the major "Russi" because he was a Russian immigrant and Valitzkin would call Afemare "Ethiopi." Nitzan noted Afemare did not complain about the incident and said he learned of it from a third party who witnessed it. He stressed that Afemare received medical attention, contrary to reports.

"It was an isolated incident and we dealt with it. It was very grave and we need to condemn any racist comment," said Nitzan. "It doesn't matter if it was over an Ethiopian or a Russian or anything else. Every soldier needs to feel he is respected."



ILAN launches annual fund drive
Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert makes the first contribution to the annual ILAN (Israel Association for Physically Disabled Children) fund-raising drive, the March of Prutot, which begins tomorrow. Schoolchildren will knock on doors around the country. (Brian Hendler)

Use of Ethiopian blood to be decided case-by-case

By JUDY SEGEL

Health Minister Yehoshua Matza met yesterday with Ethiopian *kesim* (religious leaders) and "reached an understanding" that blood from "donors who would endanger the health of the recipient" would not be used for transfusion.

Magen David Adom physicians will decide this on a case-by-case basis. Other groups, besides individual Ethiopian immigrants, would be regarded as presenting a high-risk for AIDS, ministry spokesman Effie Lahav said.

Matza did not meet with the

political leadership of the community, which has been much more militant than the *kesim* on the issue.

Asked whether Matza was adopting the recommendations of the Navon Committee, which last year met for months to discuss the blood donation issue, Lahav said the ministry "has not completed discussions of the Navon report."

He did not explain why the political leadership was not invited to the meeting with Matza.

Commenting on the Israel Radio report about an Ethiopian immigrant soldier who was denied treatment at a military

clinic, Matza said that the officer should be ejected from the IDF and not only reprimanded.

"The *kesim* are not authorized to make decisions regarding the blood affair," said Shlomo Mula, secretary of the Ethiopian Immigrant Association. "Matza is trying to push a wedge between parts of the community and cause disagreements among them. The Navon Committee recommendations are to be discussed within a month with our organization. If the minister wants to accomplish something, he should take action regarding the incident in the IDF."

17-year-old runs community center

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

While her friends are out babysitting, partying, or learning how to drive, 17-year-old Einat Hasson of Rehovot has something else to keep her busy: running the local Ofek community center.

Hasson, a live-wire who turned a former shelter into a fully functioning after-school center for Rehovot youth, is the youngest director of such a center in the country, according to Rehovot Municipality officials. Hasson runs the place along with 40 other youngsters.

"I had this shelter, which was in decent shape but needed work, but no workers to run it," recalls Moshe Atrias, the head of the children and youth wing in the city's community center (*matnas*) division.

Atrias remembered the fiery Hasson, who had completed a

local course for youth leaders. "We got a bunch of kids together and started working on rehabilitating the place," said Hasson. "All the kids in the neighborhood pitched in and before long we were able to open."

At first, Hasson, who receives a monthly salary of NIS 500, had a bit of a problem convincing local parents, she was in charge. "A woman came with her child to inquire about the activities. She came in, looked at me and asked: 'Tell me, who's the adult in charge here?' When I told her I was, it took a while for her to understand, but she quickly got used to the idea," Hasson said.

Today the center is a full-fledged beehive of activity, including a planned course in jazz for young people, also Hasson's idea. There are also plans for classes for adults in the neighborhood.

Miriam Levinger sentence commuted

President Ezer Weizman has commuted the prison sentence of Miriam Levinger to community service at the recommendation of Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, the ministry spokesperson confirmed yesterday.

Levinger, the wife of Rabbi Moshe Levinger of Hebron, was due to begin serving a three-month sentence after Passover but will instead do one month of community service.

She was convicted of attacking policemen who were trying to carry out their duty, and of biting one of the policemen when they tried to arrest her during a violent demonstration in Hebron some three years ago. Subsequently, when she disrupted the court hearings, Levinger was sentenced to three months for contempt of court.

Batsheva Tsur

Peres wants to meet Barak on national unity government

By SARAH HONIG

Labor Party Chairman Shimon Peres will try to meet again with his would-be successor Ehud Barak this week. He hopes to convince him to tone down, if not drop his vehement opposition to the national unity government.

This would be their second meeting on the issue.

Peres recently met with Barak, who did not budge from his anti-national unity stance. This week's meeting is also being arranged by Giora Einy, who for years mediated in Peres's feuds with the late Yitzhak Rabin.

Peres, meanwhile, is energetically continuing his campaign to win party support for

entering the coalition. He is meeting with groups of central committee members and tomorrow will host a gathering of local authority heads.

Peres's activity comes even though Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has not issued an invitation to Labor and has ruled out a national unity government as a "practical option right now."

In his own series of contacts with ministers and coalition partners, Netanyahu contacted United Torah Judaism MKs and stressed that "all the talk of an imminent national unity coalition is gibberish."

Inside the Likud, the view is that even if anyone around Netanyahu had considered

testing the national unity waters, the adverse reactions to reports of portfolio allocations to Labor at the Likud's expense should have thoroughly chilled any ardor Netanyahu may have had for the idea.

In Labor, Peres's unabated and explicit advocacy of national unity has led MK Haggai Merom to warn: "Attempts to bring Labor into the Netanyahu government could well lead to the collapse of the current leadership race and destroy Barak's chances to win the premiership. All this could lead thousands to quit the party and cause a split in its Knesset faction. When its all over Labor will cease being a viable alternative to the Likud."

Court okays destruction of bomber's home

By BAT SHEVA TSUR

The Kafr Tsurif home belonging to the suicide bomber who killed three women in a Tel Aviv cafe 10 days ago, was expected to be destroyed late last night after the High Court of Justice rejected a petition from the terrorist's family.

On Thursday, High Court Justice Eliezer Goldberg had issued an interim injunction preventing the destruction of the house. But, at yesterday's hearing, he joined court President Aharon Barak in ruling that the home should be destroyed.

In a dissenting opinion, the third justice, Mishael Cheshin, said there should be no collective punishment and that the wife and children of the bomber would suffer. "A son should not be visited by the sins of his father," Cheshin said.

The bomber's sister, Suad el-Baradiya, told the court yesterday that the home belonged to the entire

family of the bomber, Moussa Ranimat. She claimed, too, that it could not be proven for certain that Ranimat caused the bombing.

The court, however, accepted the position of OC Central Command Uzi Dayan who said that this would

be only a partial destruction of the house. The part of the house belonging to the bomber's brother would be left intact, Dayan said.

At a time when there are warnings of additional suicide bombings, this could be a deterrent, Dayan added.

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Pictured above (from right to left): Mayor Poleg, Mr. N. Adler, D. Skolnick.

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NEWS

in brief

Jewish businessman, aides slain in Turkey

Unknown assailants killed a Jewish businessman and three of his aides Saturday in their office in downtown Istanbul, news reports said. An employee found the bodies of Joseph Behar, 55, his driver and secretary, who had all been shot. The company's accountant, whose throat was slit, died later in the hospital, the Anatolia news agency said. The motive for the killings was not known, but police believed the assault was carried out by company debtors, the report said. The attack on Behar came as the Anti-Defamation League voiced concern over disturbing signs of antisemitic sentiment in Turkey, now governed by an Islamic-led coalition.

Firebomb thrown at Rome synagogue

A firebomb was thrown at the synagogue in central Rome late Saturday night, causing slight fire damage to one door. Police said they arrested a man who tried to flee the scene. Police said a bottle was hurled at the building near the banks of the River Tiber. Police immediately arrested the man, believed to be Middle Eastern, and were questioning him. The AGI news agency said the man was an Egyptian, but the police spokesman was unable to confirm it. Nobody was hurt in the attack and a small fire was swiftly extinguished by firemen. The synagogue has been a target for attacks previously and is guarded by a permanent police presence. A two-year-old boy died and 37 were injured in a grenade and gun attack on the building by Palestinian terrorists in 1982.

MKs hear plight of Yemenite immigrants

Yemenite immigrants sent to live in a Rehovot absorption center are living in poverty and overcrowded conditions, the Knesset Immigration and Absorption Committee was told yesterday. Immigrant Shlomo Faiz described the squalid conditions at the Oshiot absorption center, saying: "We always dreamed of coming to Israel. But here we are starving, and living in terribly crowded conditions. If our situation continues to deteriorate, we'll return to Yemen." Committee chairwoman MK Naomi Blumenthal said Faiz has to support his seven children and two wives on NIS 1,900 a month, and they live in a two-room apartment.

Hochberg indicted for murders

Amiram Hochberg, 50, a Ness Ziona scientist suspected of murdering his common-law wife, Shlomit Bleichman, and her mother, Ida, was indicted in Tel Aviv District Court yesterday. On May 21, 1996, Ida's body was found in her apartment after Shlomit, 49, had been reported missing from her job at the Weizmann Institute. Shlomit's body has not been found and the time of death is not known. Police said Hochberg murdered her and Shlomit and then fled the country with his and Shlomit's 12-year-old son, Itai. He was arrested in Switzerland in November and extradited a month ago.

Hospital workers postpone strike

The union of government hospital administrative and maintenance personnel has postponed its threatened strike at least until after Pessah. After meeting with Health Minister Yehoshua Matza, the union agreed to continue negotiating with the Treasury over 1,500 job slots needed in hospitals around the country. The union has threatened unrest nearly every spring, knowing the government would be under severe pressure if institutions were not cleaned for the holiday.

Headlights always a good idea

As of today, drivers on intercity roads no longer must keep their headlights on. Nonetheless, Ori Gershov, head of the transportation safety officers' association, recommended that all drivers keep their headlights lit at all times, regardless of what season it is.

IMA celebrates 85th anniversary

The Israel Medical Association, which represents most of the country's physicians, marks its 85th anniversary today in a festive meeting in Tel Aviv to be attended by Health Minister Yehoshua Matza. The organization, which has 17,000 members, was founded in 1912 with 32 members and was called the "Hebrew Medical Association for Jaffa and the Jaffa District." IMA chairman Dr. Yoram Blachar said yesterday that in the coming years, the organization will focus on ensuring a proper level of hospitalization services and improving work conditions for doctors.

Boy stabbed in school fight

A 10th-grade boy was stabbed in the knee by another student, a ninth-grader, in a fight during recess at the Sirkin High School in Holon. The two were quarreling about the use of the soccer field. The boy was brought to Holon's Wolfson Hospital. The stabber was arrested.

'Sleazy' Tories fear landslide

By GERRARD RAVEN

LONDON (Reuters) - Conservative members of parliament yesterday appealed to colleagues at the center of sleaze allegations to put their party's interests ahead of their own and step down as candidates in the May 1 election.

They said the party desperately needed to wrench the focus of the campaign away from stories of sexual indiscretions and financial irregularities to start clawing back the opposition Labor Party's 26 percent lead in the opinion polls. Sir Michael Hirst, chairman of the Scottish Conservatives, resigned Saturday over claims he had had a homosexual lover.

But Neil Hamilton, a former minister at the center of allegations that Harrods store owner Mohammed Al-Fayed paid several MPs generously to ask parliamentary questions, refused to quit as candidate for his safe northern England seat.

And Piers Merchant, whose photograph kissing a 17-year-old nightclub hostess in a park appeared in a tabloid newspaper last week, Saturday won the backing of his local party as their stan-

dard-bearer in the London commuter town of Beckenham. "Every Conservative candidate should examine his conscience

before our personal interests," he told BBC radio. "This is doing us an enormous amount of damage and certainly if

"I fully understand your position and support the decision you have made so speedily and in such a courageous and honorable man-

polling day, which he hoped his party would use to cut into Labor's lead.

But the first two weeks of the campaign have seen a series of publicity disasters for his party, which has held power since 1979.

As well as Hirst, one Conservative Scottish MP has stepped down as a candidate amid rumors about his private life, while former minister Tim Smith, implicated in the "cash for questions" affair, was disowned by his local party.

"The Tories face not simply being buried under a tide of sleaze, but under a Labor landslide," *The Sunday Times* commented. "To have any chance of avoiding that fate, they must about the careers of the two MPs (Hamilton and Merchant). Bookmakers William Hill offered odds of 11-to-one that Major would be re-elected. The odds on a Labor victory rose to six-to-one on the best they have been for Labor since 1979.

A poll in *The Mail on Sunday* newspaper gave Labor 52 percent support among women, against 30% for the Conservatives and 14% for the minority Liberal Democrats.

Labor pledges Nazi gold conference

LONDON (Reuters) - Britain's Labor Party pledged yesterday to call a conference of countries that handled Nazi gold during World War II to discuss compensation for Holocaust survivors if it comes to power.

Foreign affairs spokesman Robin Cook said the idea of a conference after meeting the US Federal Reserve should be "put to use in some act of reparation."

Swiss Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti last month backed the idea of a conference after meeting British Labor MP Greville Janner, a vice-president of the World Jewish Congress.

Janner wants an international agreement that \$68 million of gold seized by the allies at the end of the war and still held by the British and American central banks should be used to compensate Holocaust survivors and their families.

Britain's Foreign Office has been cautious about a conference, saying it is open to the idea provided the meeting has a clear purpose and is well prepared.

But Cook said in a statement: "A Labor government will show leadership by convening an international conference to put some urgency into finding a way forward."

and say, "If I stand, will that make it more likely or less likely that this election will be fought on policies and that the Conservative government will get re-elected," said John Townend, a member of the party's powerful 1922 Committee.

"If it's less likely, I think there comes a time when we have got to put the party and the country

I were in a position where I had to put myself or the party first, I know which I would put first," said veteran legislator Sir James Spicer, who is retiring at the election.

Prime Minister John Major hinted in a letter to Hirst that he would like to see Merchant and Hamilton sacrifice themselves for the wider interests of their party.

ner," he said.

But *The Sunday Mirror* said Hirst quit only after seven hours of pressure by two senior colleagues in the Scottish party who told him, incorrectly, that the newspaper had a dossier about a past indiscretion in his private life.

Major announced the election date on March 15, giving an unusually long 6 weeks' notice of

Saudis: Extradite Dhahran suspect from Canada

RIYADH (AP) - An Interior Ministry official yesterday said the Saudi suspect held in Canada for last June's bombing that killed 19 American servicemen should be extradited to Saudi Arabia, not to the United States.

Canada arrested Hani Sayegh March 18 for possible involvement in the deadly truck bombing at Dhahran in eastern Saudi Arabia. Canadian officials claim Sayegh is a threat to Canadian security and want to deport him. US officials have said that since he entered Canada from the United States, Sayegh could be deported to American territory.

But the Saudi official, who spoke under customary conditions of anonymity, said Sayegh should be sent to Saudi Arabia since he is a Saudi and the bombing happened on Saudi territory. The official said Saudi Arabia had made a lot of progress in the investigation and needed to interrogate Sayegh to fit the pieces together. He also said the United States was not the right place to try anyone implicated in the Dhahran blast. The official said the Canadians had expressed

understanding for Saudi Arabia's request.

Sayegh has requested refugee status in Canada, claiming he was persecuted in his homeland for religious reasons. He is a Shiite Muslim, while the majority of Saudis are Sunnis.

On Thursday, Canadian officials said they believe Sayegh, 28, conducted surveillance at the military housing complex in Dhahran and drove the car that signaled the go-ahead to the driver of a fuel truck packed with 2.5 tons of explosives. Sayegh denies involvement in the bombing and says he was in Syria at the time.

A report from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, parts of which were made public Thursday, said Sayegh is a member of Saudi Hizbullah, a militant Shiite group with links to Hizbullah in Lebanon.

The Saudis reportedly have detained dozens of suspects in the Dhahran attack, including some with ties to Iran, but have not released any details of the inquiry. US officials have been frustrated by lack of access to suspects.

Yemen gunman slays 8

SANA'A (Reuters) - A school headmistress, a teacher and six children died yesterday when a man fired a machinegun at hundreds of pupils at two schools in the Yemeni capital, a security official said.

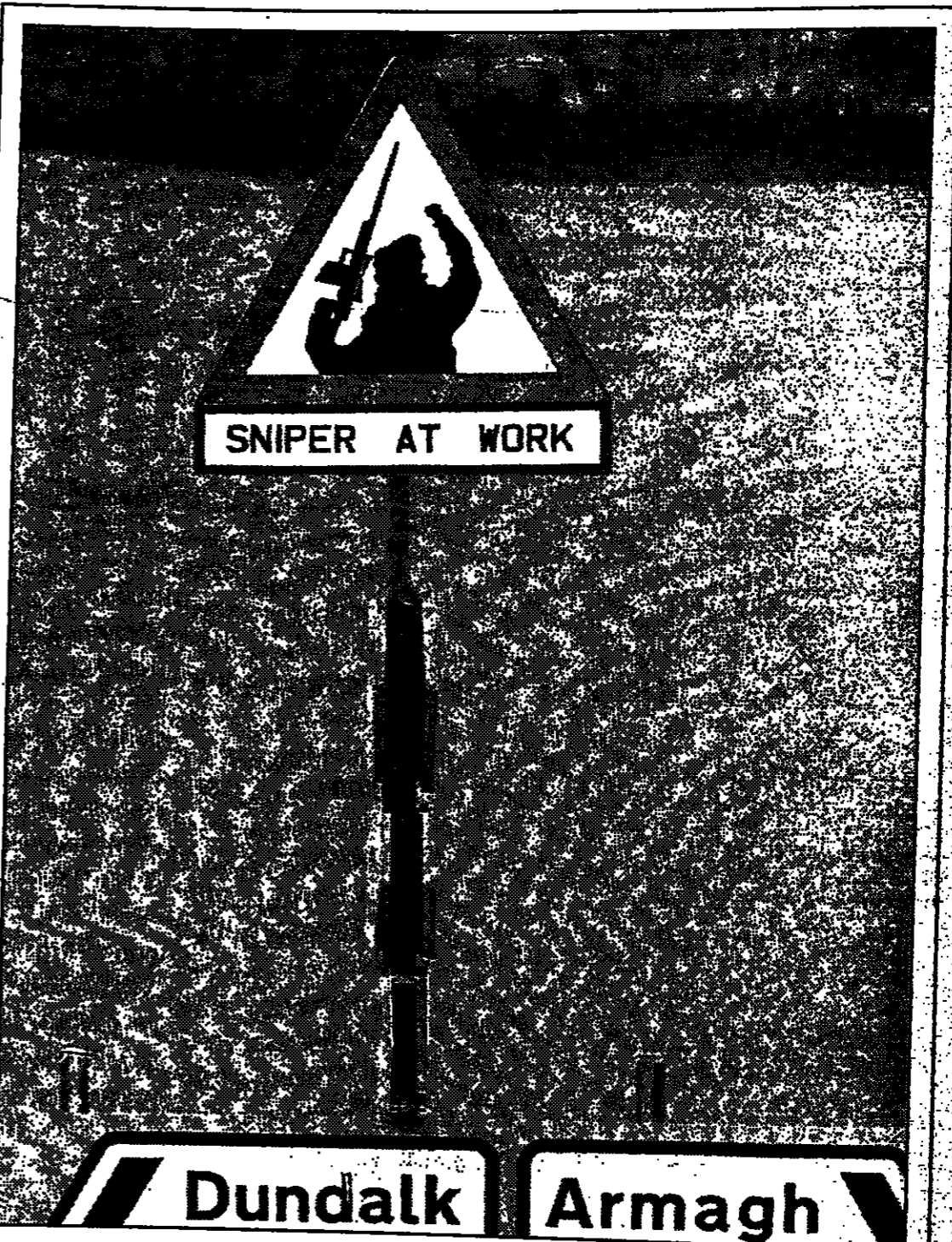
An Interior Ministry statement said a total of 11 pupils from the two neighboring schools and three other people were wounded. The security official named the headmistress as Asma Noman, an Egyptian woman in her forties.

Police arrested the gunman.

Witnesses said he was a disgruntled former bus driver at the Tala'eh school who had been fired by the headmistress. The security official said the assailant was insane.

The attacks spread panic among the 1,000 students in the schools in the middle class suburb of Asbahi.

Some of the panic-stricken children dived for cover while others ran away. The schools were closed after the shootings, which witnesses said were the first such incident in the capital of the impoverished state.



Drive carefully

An Irish Republican Army sniper warning stands on the Armagh to Dundalk road in Northern Ireland yesterday, near where an IRA gunman shot and injured a Royal Ulster Constabulary policeman late Saturday night.

(AP)

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Chamber Orchest...
of Pizara, perform...
artist Milan Sindr...
by the avant-garde...
Jazz Quartet. The...
artists in 1995, at...
coming along.

Czechs hail 'Kolya'

Praguers gave a typically Czech homecoming welcome on Friday to Zdenek and Jan Sverak, whose film *Kolya* last week won the Oscar for best foreign-language film.

Scores of fans and journalists greeted the father-and-son team as they arrived back at Prague airport, toasting them with traditional Czech Pilsner beer.

"This is a national celebration," yelled the father, Zdenek, a veteran Czech stage and screen actor who wrote the politically charged script and played the main role as a soured former symphony cellist under communism.

With the crowd chanting "Show it to us," his 31-year-old son, Jan, who won with his second Oscar-nominated film, whipped out the coveted gold statue to whoops and cheers.

The story of an aging bachelor's reawakening when he takes an abandoned Russian boy, Kolya, under his wing on the eve of Prague's bloodless 1989 Velvet Revolution touched a chord with nostalgic Czechs.

The Sverak team made their first international splash in 1992, when the postwar drama-comedy *Elementary School* earned an Oscar nomination. Zdenek is currently working on the team's first original English-language script.

President Vaclav Havel, a former dissident playwright under communism who acted in films himself, sent a victory telegram to the Sveraks after the win, saying "I am happy that after many years a..."

Israel's 'Queen of the Night'

By MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

The hall was packed with enthusiastic youngsters, most of whom were getting their first taste of opera. Suddenly, the Henry Crown Symphony Hall in Jerusalem darkened and an entrancing voice emerged from another part of the hall, as if descending from the sky. It was the soprano Shira Green, singing the Queen of the Night's first aria in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Green, 25, was born and raised in a small moshav, Mishmar Ayalon, between Jerusalem and Rehovot. Now, she is studying voice in Berlin.

Green began her musical studies when she was in second grade. "My father was playing the clarinet at home and I envied him," she reminisces. At 16, she was about to audition for a summer music camp. "I came with my clarinet but I entered the wrong room by mistake. They asked me to sing something. I wanted to get out but was persuaded to stay and try. I did not know anything classical so I sang the kid's tune 'Hayalda Hachi Yafa Bagan' ('The prettiest girl in kindergarten'), and I was immediately accepted."

After her army service, which included an armored-vehicle course and working on the bridges along the Jordan River, she took a few voice lessons and suddenly a new career emerged.

This year she was supposed to complete her master's degree at the Jerusalem Music Academy.

"I do a lot more than music there. I study painting and sculpting which I have always done, but not professionally. I also studied fencing and African dancing. And believe me, it all helps me sing."

In the last few weeks, while here during a semester break from Berlin, she participated in a series of school concerts in which she and baritone Dan Ettinger presented *The Magic Flute* in

Hebrew. Green sang all three female roles in the opera, the princess Pamina, her evil mother the Queen of the Night, and the charming Papagena. In the past few days she participated in a children's production of the same opera, this time in Haifa, in which she sang the Queen of the Night - a demanding part she knows she will be singing for many years to come.

Shira Green sings the Queen of the Night with the Haifa Symphony Orchestra today (5) at the Haifa Auditorium.



NEWS

of the muse

'Tropical' storm in Miami

A Cuban American civil-rights group last week criticized anti-Castro exiles who forced a Miami radio station to stop playing music from Cuba, calling them an intolerant minority who acted "like the Spanish Inquisition." The Cuban American Defense League said the action was "another glaring example of intolerance and censorship in our community."

Tropical 98.3 radio station's broadcast of songs by Cuban pop stars such as Los Van Van and Manolin, "the Doctor of Salsa," broke a taboo by Miami's Spanish-language radio stations on music from the communist-ruled island. Right-wing stations immediately attacked Tropical and it stopped the music after receiving a bomb threat, and several advertisers canceled spots. *Reuter*

Rostropovich honored by Yeltsin

Conductor Mstislav Rostropovich was honored by Russian President Boris Yeltsin last week for "Service to the Fatherland." Rostropovich received the award on the eve of his 70th birthday "for service to the state and a major contribution to the international development of music," according to Yeltsin's decree as quoted by the ITAR-Tass news agency.

Rostropovich's support for Soviet dissidents, including author Alexander Solzhenitsyn, earned him the wrath of the Kremlin in the early 1970s. He received permission to leave the Soviet Union for two years in 1974, then refused to return and was stripped of his citizenship in 1978.

He was music director of the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington until retiring in 1994 and now spends much of his time in Russia. *AP*



Mstislav Rostropovich (Erwin Schenkelbach)

New TV channel launched in UK

Britain's new Channel 5 station went on air last night. It is the first commercial terrestrial channel to be launched in Britain since Channel 4 in 1982. Whereas C4 has a remit to cater for minority tastes, Channel 5 will go head-to-head against the powerful ITV commercial network. Britons spend an average of almost four hours in front of the set every day. *Reuter*

Pirouettes and plaudits

The Jerusalem Rubin Academy of Music and Dance is hosting a week of International Music and Dance through April 3 as the inaugural event of its 50th anniversary with the participation of 12 academies from abroad. The event started on Saturday.

The academy is also giving a Salute to Israeli Creativity, with a dance performance and debate at the Wise Auditorium on the Givat Ram Campus today. Panelists include composers Zvi Avni, Mark Kopytman and choreographers Nina Timofeyevna and Moshe Kedem. *Helen Kaye*

Art and nature are one

The Days of Music and Nature Festival will involve 25 stages tucked among the beautiful countryside of Western Galilee and around Misgav where 30 arts events will happen during Hol Hamoed Pessah, April 24 to 26. This festival combines hikes (mornings) and concerts (afternoons). Performers include the Israel Chamber Orchestra, the Young Philharmonic, Ahinoam Nini and Ehud Banai, David Deor and actor Moshe Bekor.

There'll be jazz, classical, ethnic and pop music, not to mention a most unusual summit meeting between Johann Sebastian Bach and versions of the old Leipziger's music in jazz by Peter Wertheimer together with songs from Egyptian composer Abdul el-Wahab. The budget is NIS 750,000, down 20 percent from last year. Tickets are already on sale at all agencies and prices range from NIS 20 to 80, depending on the activities you choose. *Helen Kaye*



Ahinoam Nini (Ronan Ackerman)

Laurels for Camerata

The Israel Camerata Jerusalem recently returned from highly successful tours of North America and Germany. Critics competed with each other on crowning the orchestra with unprecedented laurels. "The orchestral blend achieved by the ensemble was nothing short of breathtaking," said the *Calgary Herald* critic, while the *Los Angeles Times* commented on "effortless virtuosity, tight instrumental balances and a broad dynamic palette that the group uses tastefully."

The *Boston Herald* said it best: "The Israel Camerata is a crackjack chamber orchestra that plays everything with enormous polish and virtuosity." *Michael Ajzenstadt*

against the same backdrop Tolstoy described some 150 years ago: war-torn Chechnya. While director Sergei Bidrov sticks quite closely to the outline of the novel, his movie leaves us, almost inevitably, with a darker feeling.

is not really a romantic sketch, which tends to skimp on psychological explanations and refrains completely from delivering the unequivocal anti-war message that Bidrov's picture offers up. The filmmaker

reshes out the skeletal plot with lots of buddy-movie-styled banter (according to this familiar formula, a mismatched pair are thrown together by circumstance and, thanks to their shared shackles and hard luck, move from

mutual irritation to being... of friends). More unting to it also charts the soldiers' increasingly warm interactions with their captors.

Abdul-Murat's serious-eyed adolescent daughter (the lovely

primeval-looking village in Dagestan, about 300 kilometers from the Chechen war-zone). The sharply pitched mountains themselves are so striking and fierce, they almost serve as supporting characters in the film.

phnya

(sanna Mekhralieva), in particular, looks on a bit wistfully as she sings food to the prisoners. At 13, she's mistress of her father's house and seems drawn to her captives, as they are to her, out of a blend of loneliness and curiosity: she appears to be half in love with fair-skinned, dopey-nosed Vanya, and much of the film's poignancy derives from the fact that a happy ending to her teenage crush is clearly out of the question.

Bidrov's movie succeeds through its small scale and the plucky comic sympathy he extends to all his characters, with the possible exception of one really vulgar, caviar-gulping Russian police chief. And aside from being a strong political statement, *Prisoner* offers an anthropologically fascinating glimpse at Caucasian tribal life. The movie was shot in a

It always rains in September

By HELEN KAYE

A play written by an Englishman about a Yorkshire couple performed by Scots in Israel is an intriguing possibility," smiled director Bill Graham.

Well, it's happened. Graham's multi-award winning production of *September in the Rain* by John Godber performed by the Tryst Theater of Larbert opens at Gerard Behar in Jerusalem on Thursday with two performances at Tel Aviv's Yad Lebanim and another in Ra'anana.

September in the Rain is about Liz (Carol Clark) and Jack (Jim Allen) who always go to Blackpool for their annual September vacation - and it's always raining. The two-character comedy tracks the couple through the 40 years of their marriage from the 1950s to the 1990s.

Graham observes that "a major attraction of the play for me is the audiences' recognition of the changing moods in this story of a marriage, and of similar experiences in their own lives."

A shortened version won Scotland's One-Act Play Festival in 1995. The complete play won Best Production, Best Director and the Adjudicator's



Liz (Carol Clark) and Jack (Jim Allen) go to Blackpool for their vacation every year.

Award at the Dundalk International Drama Festival last May, and reached the finals of the British Amateur Drama Festival in June.

The 10-member Tryst, based in the small town (30,000) of Larbert near Falkirk in Scotland, is an energetic amateur theater group which Graham, who still teaches drama at Larbert High School, founded with graduates

from his drama class in the early 1960s.

Some of the original members are still with Tryst, and "the unique thing about the club is its versatility," he continues. The actors are all equally competent offstage, "so that there is a great synergy that underpins our performances."

As amateurs, they all have daytime jobs. Clark and Allen are both teachers.

Other professions include a psychiatric nurse, a public-relations consultant, a silver reclaimer and employees of Scotland's petrochemical industry.

A folk and rock concert, donations from some 100 local businesses and a well-attended production of *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole aged 13 3/4* helped raise the nearly £5,000 the group needed to make the trip which is sponsored by EADI, or English Amateur Drama in Israel.

"We saw them at Dundalk and were totally blown away, and that was before we knew they'd won," says EADI head Yanki Fachler, who added to Tryst's coffers by getting funds "from an enthusiastic bunch of Scottish Jews who were turned on by the idea of this first-ever visit by a Scottish drama group to Israel."



Bratislava comes to Jerusalem

A generous dollop of Bratislava's performing and plastic arts is coming to our capital from Slovakia's capital as part of a cultural exchange agreement between the two countries. Between April 6 and 10 there'll be music, theater, puppet theater, dance, movies and art with some 155 participants. Highlights include a gala concert performance of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* by the Capella Istropolitana Chamber Orchestra, another Mozart opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*, performed by the Arena puppet theater of mime artist Milan Sladek (seen above in *Apocalypse*), *Dyp Inaf* by the avant-garde Stoka Theater and jazz from the Slovak Jazz Quartet. This visit is in response to one by 80 Israeli artists in 1995, and Bratislava mayor Peter Kresanek is coming along. *Helen Kaye*

SEE IT IN HEBREW- HEAR IT IN ENGLISH!

TWELFTH NIGHT
April 8 at 8:30 p.m.
A modern-day version of Shakespeare's classic
Directed by Michael Gurevitz

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
April 15 at 8:30 p.m.
Gogo's famous satire transported to a small southern Israeli town, where identities are mistaken and corrupt officials run rampant.

TAKING SIDES
Special performance
Thursday, April 17, 1997 at 8:30 p.m.
ZOA House (1 Daniel Frisch Street, corner of Ibn Gvirol)
Ronald Harwood's smash hit (London and New York) about one of the most outstanding conductors of his generation, Wilhelm Furtwangler, who was brought before the American Tribunal in Berlin in 1946 accused of Nazi sympathizing during WWII.

PLEASE NOTE: There will not be a simultaneous English translation on April 1, 1997. However, on this date, *Company of Men* will be accompanied by a simultaneous translation into GERMAN. Admissions: There will a simultaneous translation into HEBREW on Thursday, April 24, 1997, at 8:30 p.m.

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Egypt's antisemitic press

Today the Anti-Defamation League will present the Knesset with a just-released report documenting virulent antisemitism in the Egyptian press. When asked about this distressing phenomenon, President Hosni Mubarak is fond of (a) comparing press freedom in Egypt to that of the United States and (b) attacking this newspaper for what he perceives is an anti-Egyptian bias.

"Don't ask me to control the press here - I simply can't. Our media follows the example of the American media," Mubarak told the Jerusalem Report, adding that, "The Jerusalem Post frequently offends me with its awful and terrible cartoons and its most [impolite] articles." Not so fast, President Mubarak. We hate to be impolite, but as far as we know, the US government does not own stock in the major newspapers, and appoint their editors and the chairmen of their boards. Nor does the US government enjoy a monopoly on the printing and distribution of newspapers, or use that monopoly (according to the US State Department) "to limit output of opposition publications."

The prestigious international writers' association PEN reports that, "Although Egypt's press is one of the least restricted in the Arab world, serious problems exist, and they are worsening in the face of civil conflict." According to PEN, "In 1995, already restrictive press laws were amended to include what has been called the 'press assassination law,' supposedly enacted to help combat terrorism, but which in fact narrows the scope for freedom of expression."

This included a provision for "precautionary detentions" of journalists, in other words, detention of journalists without any charges. In any case, even if the press were as free as a bird, as Mubarak would have us believe, that would not absolve the Egyptian society as a whole from addressing the hatred that is being fomented on an almost daily basis against Jews, Judaism, and Israel.

Jews, according to the ADL study, are consistently portrayed as a "satanic force trying to undermine Islam," as "seeking domination of the Middle East and the world," and as equivalent to Nazis. The report continues, "The most common depiction [of Jews] is the stooped, bearded man wearing a black robe with a long, crooked nose - the same distorted stereotype of a European Jew used by the Nazis and later found in Communist Russia."

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, like other Israeli leaders before him, is routinely depicted as a Nazi, complete with swastikas on his uniform. Last October, Mustafa Amin wrote in Al-Akbar, "If he continues Hitler's policies,

he will end like Hitler." As if this were not enough, Jews are seen as "the origin of evil and corruption, spreading AIDS, prostitution, and the insidious destruction of Egyptian society," the ADL reports. Blood libels from the Middle Ages are alive and well in Egypt, where Al-Ahram published an article claiming that Jews sacrifice Christian and Moslem children.

Though the virioli has been stepped up a notch since Netanyahu's election, the pattern is consistent, according to the ADL, since Israel's founding in 1948, through the peace with Egypt in 1979, and after the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993.

To this, Mubarak says, "Don't ask us to 'educate' our people for peace with Israel - they'll tell me to go to hell." Is this what Mubarak really wants us to believe? That Egyptians are more anti-Israel than Jordanians, whose king is fervently calling for peace between "all of the children of Abraham?" Mubarak is saying, in effect, do not ask me to lead my people - they do not want peace with Israel and I understand them.

Egypt wants and expects to be treated as the leader of the Arab world, particularly with respect to the peace process. Yet it is impossible for Egypt to lead the Arab world toward a real, lasting peace with Israel if it does not also lead on the front of cultural acceptance and normalization.

The sad part about Egypt's backward form of leadership is that it permeates and suffocates the culture as a whole. Restrictions on press freedom, the epidemic of press antisemitism, and the spoiler role in the peace process are all symptoms of a larger, even more troubling phenomenon: the shift in Egyptian culture toward extremism.

As Egyptian author Karim Alrawi wrote in Index on Censorship in May 1994, "It is hard to describe what it is like to be living in a society whose culture is dying. It is not just a question of the persecution of writers and academics, nor of the tightening of restrictions on publications and the increased censorship of theaters and films... It is a little like watching a large and lumbering animal slowly being sucked into the mire; it is the knowledge that what was won by past generations so painstakingly is being lost, possibly forever."

Ultimately, it is Egypt that is the victim of its descent into a Nasserist pan-Arabism which thumbs its nose at modernity and modernity's representative in the Middle East, Israel. Antisemitism is an example of such backwardness in its raw form; it will take real leadership to begin the hard task of uprooting it.

Middle way

ALEX LUBOTZKY

Mention the conversion issue in any Jewish forum, here or abroad, and tempers will rise. Mention it in a gathering that includes Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, and you will find yourself in a veritable battlefield, with wounded (sensibilities) strewn all over the place.

What seems most useful, therefore, is to find something on which we can all agree.

Judaism should be associated with clear, honest practice, and not with evasion or double-dealing. Since everyone must surely subscribe to that, what about the ridiculous distinction whereby non-Orthodox conversions have traditionally been recognized in Israel if they were carried out

not for religious ones. Thus any convert would be classified as Jewish in his ID, but the Population Registry would specify the exact nature of conversion he or she underwent.

The fear of being called discriminatory should not deter one from calling a spade a spade.

From the civil point of view, every conversion is equal; halachically speaking, it isn't. If a son comes to his Orthodox father and says he wants to marry a convert, that father is fully justified in wanting to know who converted her.

The conversion law, anchoring in legislation the current status quo whereby conversions by non-Orthodox rabbis done in Israel are not recognized, is scheduled to come before the Knesset today for a first reading. Should it pass, American Jewry, with its overwhelming proportion of non-Orthodox Jews, will feel humiliated, and their Judaism delegitimized.

The Knesset's religious factions would, of course, dearly like to see all conversion solely in the hands of the Orthodox rabbinate. However, in their heart of hearts, they know this aspiration isn't realistic.

The proposal described solves the halachic problem: and in granting all non-Orthodox converts at least a symbolic recognition of their conversion, addresses too the legitimate needs of the Conservative and Reform.

The big news is that this is the first time any objective proposal on this sensitive topic has garnered support from both sides.

Yesterday, Meir Porush of United Torah Judaism told me:

Give peace (among Jews) a chance!

abroad, but not if they were done here?

This is all the more bizarre given the widely accepted fact that such conversions are actually far more stringently supervised here than anywhere else.

The current loophole which allows someone who has been turned away by the Israeli rabbinate to take a trip abroad and return "Jewish" for all intents and purposes demeans all conversion procedures, Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

The proposal I am advocating is simple, clear, and honest: that there be no differentiation between non-Orthodox conversions, wherever they may have been carried out. All should be recognized for civil purposes, but

Dry Bones



"This is a serious proposal that warrants serious consideration." Porush added that he wanted to put it before the Council of Torah Sages.

Those bodies who have petitioned the High Court against the conversion law have agreed to postpone their petition only if today's first reading of the law is also postponed.

My fervent hope is that matters will not be brought to a head today, so that all sides can gain

more time to reach a genuine settlement.

A compromise proposal like the above could end, once and for all, the perennial debate over "Who's a Jew."

That being the case, all I am saying is: Give peace (among the Jews) a chance!

The writer, a Third Way MK, is a mathematics professor and Orthodox resident of Efrat.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ICE SKATING

Sir - Your sub-editor did Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovsky a great injustice with the headline, "Ice skaters disappoint in Lausanne" (March 23). We watched them live on Eurosport, and they gave a brilliant, flawless and dramatic program, drawing very high praise from the British commentators. Despite their bias in favor of the British couple just above them in the ranking, the com-

mentators agreed the Israelis had performed better and deserved to overtake them. They then expressed shock and displeasure at the marks they received from the judges.

Chait and Sakhnovsky did us proud and made a marvelous impression in a competition of the highest standard.

Beersheba. AMIEL SCHOTZ

LACK OF CREDIBILITY

Sir - The most important ingredient in any relationship, whether between individuals or nations, is trust. Without it, there can be little hope of any lasting accommodation. Perhaps the single greatest problem facing Binyamin Netanyahu is that no one - neither the Americans, the Jordanians, the Egyptians, nor even members of his own cabinet and party - believes or trusts him. And given his record of broken promises since he became prime minister, can anyone blame them?

If Netanyahu occupied a lower political position, his behavioral and attitudinal problems might be overlooked. But as leader of the nation, he represents us. What he says and does determines our fate. I wonder if he truly understands the terrible damage that his lack of credibility is causing the nation. Is he unable or unwilling to understand this? I shudder to think of what lies ahead for us with him at our helm.

DR. ROBERT ROCKAWAY Tel Aviv.

BLIND EYE

Sir - The fact that the US does not wish to condemn or even to see the violations of the Oslo Agreement by Arafat reminds me of a similar American blindness in 1970. At that time, there was an agreement between Israel and Egypt for a cease-fire to end the War of Attrition according to which Egypt agreed to remove its missiles from the Suez Canal Zone.

Several weeks later, the Americans were shown Israeli photographs of Egyptian missiles which had returned to the zone in violation

of the agreement. American reaction to those photos was that they were not missiles, but perhaps chimneys of some new factories Egyptians were building in the area. Unfortunately for Israel, during the Yom Kippur War, these "chimneys" shot down dozens of Israeli planes which were defending the country from the Egyptian invaders.

When will the Americans ever learn? Or don't they really care what happens to us?

JOSHUA J. ADLER Jerusalem.

SECULAR JEWS

Sir - Further to Dr. Jacob Rosin's letter of March 14 "Secular majority," I am in agreement with his "logic" as far as it went, but would like to take it on from there.

If a gentile wants to become a secular Jew, why does he need to become a "Jew"? What has he gained? A secular Jew lives like a gentile, his children or grandchildren marry gentiles, and he is right back where he came from. So why

bother? If it is because he wants to die a Jew, he would be better off dying a righteous gentile than a Jew who doesn't keep the Torah.

Orthodox Jews are just Jews who try to live by the God-given Torah we received at Mt. Sinai from the creator of the universe, through Moses.

MRS. CHAYA ROCHEL SCHWARTZ Jerusalem.

JERUSALEM'S TAXI DRIVERS

Sir - I have just returned from two weeks in Jerusalem. I had heard many things about Jerusalem's taxi drivers, all of them bad. The reality was worse. Adjectives such as dishonest, unhelpful, rude, negative, all spring to mind, as well as a number of unprintable ones.

I heard people bemoaning the lack of tourists in Jerusalem. Personally, I do not think it is the terrorist threats; it is your taxi drivers that make tourists swear never to return.

On the bright side, in two days in Tel Aviv, I encountered only courteous, friendly and helpful taxi drivers. Perhaps Jerusalem should import a few of them? H.A. SHERMAN Calgary, Canada.

STONE-THROWING

Sir - A fundamental problem in the "peace process" is that the Palestinian Authority changes the meaning of words. An example is Palestinian spokesman Nabil Shaath's declaration: "We are using peaceful protest. The Israeli army shoots at peaceful demonstrators" (March 21). By saying "we," Shaath identifies with the previous day's stoning of Israeli soldiers in Bethlehem.

The Netanyahu government should reject the Palestinian concepts that hurling stones is a "peaceful demonstration" and that the Palestinian Police obligations are met by hovering about behind stone-throwers.

SUE GOLDEN LERNER Jerusalem.

UNNECESSARY

Sir - Do we really need another confrontation with the Palestinians? Is it really worth any more deaths, injuries or hospital visits for the Israelis or Arabs?

Prime Minister Netanyahu can choose the path toward peace or the path toward war, but he cannot take them both at the same time. Any further bloodshed rests upon him.

MICHAEL A. GLUECK, M.D. Newport Beach, California.

it isn't the system that's at fault

SUSAN HATTIS ROLEF

motion, and that was the national unity government on March 15, 1990: even though the country has had numerous governments enjoying very scant Knesset majorities, and was governed by a minority government from August 1993 to June 1996.

What about the argument that the new system strengthened the smaller parties vis-a-vis the two

it enabled Netanyahu to come to power. Even if the last elections had been held under the old system and Labor had received more seats than the Likud, the president would, in all likelihood, have called upon Netanyahu to form the new government.

One cannot ignore two facts. The first is that whereas the balance of seats in the 13th Knesset

received the kind of public exposure money can't buy. For 1995-96, Bruno Magli's sales increased nearly 30 percent worldwide.

Simpson said in a pre-trial deposition for his civil trial that he never owned such "ugly" shoes.

The Italian shoemaker has

Has direct election of the premier really weakened the Knesset?

large ones? Though the split voting (for the prime minister and for the Knesset) certainly aided this phenomenon, it cannot be held solely responsible for it.

One should not forget the periods under the old system when some of the smaller parties, like the National Religious Party and Mapam, held 10 or more Knesset seats.

The main reason for the current weakness of the two major parties has less to do with the system than with the fact that they simply do not represent large sections of the population, such as the traditional Sephardim, the Russian new immigrants, or Israeli Arabs.

If the two large parties want to win back votes, they will just have to try harder.

The weakest argument against the system of direct election is that

between the left-wing and Arab parties versus the right-wing and religious parties was 61 to 59, in the 14th Knesset it is 52 to 68.

The second is that, unlike Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres had never won an election, and his refusal to declare Ehud Barak as his candidate for defense minister didn't exactly increase his chances in May 1996.

So it isn't the system that brought Netanyahu to power, but the fact that he is a shrewd politician.

POSTSCRIPT

LENDING TRUTH to the adage that there's no such thing as bad publicity, the Bruno Magli company says sales soared after its designer shoes were first mentioned in the O.J. Simpson murder case.

If certainly didn't do away with the horse trading that has traditionally accompanied the formation and preserving of our governments, since the prime minister still needs Knesset approval for his government, and can still be threatened with a no-confidence motion.

The problem lies not in the system, but in faulty norms. This means that the result of the police investigation into the appointment of the attorney-general is likely to be far more significant for the future of our political system than any attempt to change that system.

The writer is a political scientist.

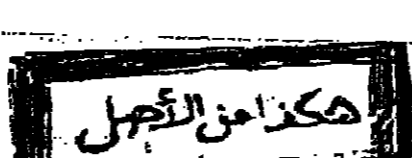


Image Problem

Old View of Internet: Nerds. New View: Nuts.

By GEORGE JOHNSON

FOR the techno-libertarians intent on keeping the abstract duchy called cyberspace the freest of all lands, the last few months have been a nightmare of bad vibrations rippling through what the electronic elite derisively calls the "old media."

Every few days, it seems, television newscasts and newspapers carry reports of unspeakable acts conducted over the Internet. Pedophiles and maybe even prisoners trade pornography and tips on kidnapping, while trying to seduce children in electronic chat-rooms. Right-wing lunatics post recipes for explosives and rouse their members with paranoid visions of immense conspiracies that only they can overthrow.

Earlier this year, the United States Parole Commission, alarmed at the flotsam sifted from the data gurgling through the fiber optical pipes, added a new item to the list of things Federal parolees can be kept from doing: owning firearms, drinking to excess, consorting with criminals, and now,

Come visit my web site, kiddies, and I'll give you some candy.

using a computer to access the Internet.

The horror stories about the crimes made possible by this powerfully anarchic technology pale against the news last week that a cult of Southern California computer enthusiasts, who supported themselves making Web pages for businesses, committed mass suicide in preparation for a science-fiction version of the Rapture, in which they would be beamed aboard a U.F.O. hiding behind the Hale-Bopp comet. Taking phenobarbital like Communion wafers, and following the drug with vodka chasers, they rested, shrouded in purple, and quietly awaited the ultimate trip.

Anyone who spends much time randomly wandering the Web may have found their delusion eerily familiar. For months rumors about the U.F.O. and the comet have festered in discussion groups and on Web pages all over the Net, sharing space with speculation about military plots to blow up T.W.A. Flight 800 and the Federal building in Oklahoma City, or to destroy Zairians with Ebola virus engineered in government labs.

The computer cult, with the sappy name Heaven's Gate, added to the group hallucination, using its own Web site to spread an ideology that combined Christianity and gnosticism with scenarios that could have come from watching too many X-Files reruns while reading the Weekly World News. But the weirdest thing about their cut-and-paste religion was that it wasn't really so weird at all — at least not on the Internet, where one can leaf through digitally "enhanced" photos showing pyramids on Mars and a second Sphinx — linked, through some ethereal connection probably involving resonating crystals, with the monuments of Egypt (which may have been built with the help of enlightened extraterrestrials).

Never mind that most of the Internet's

Continued on page 4



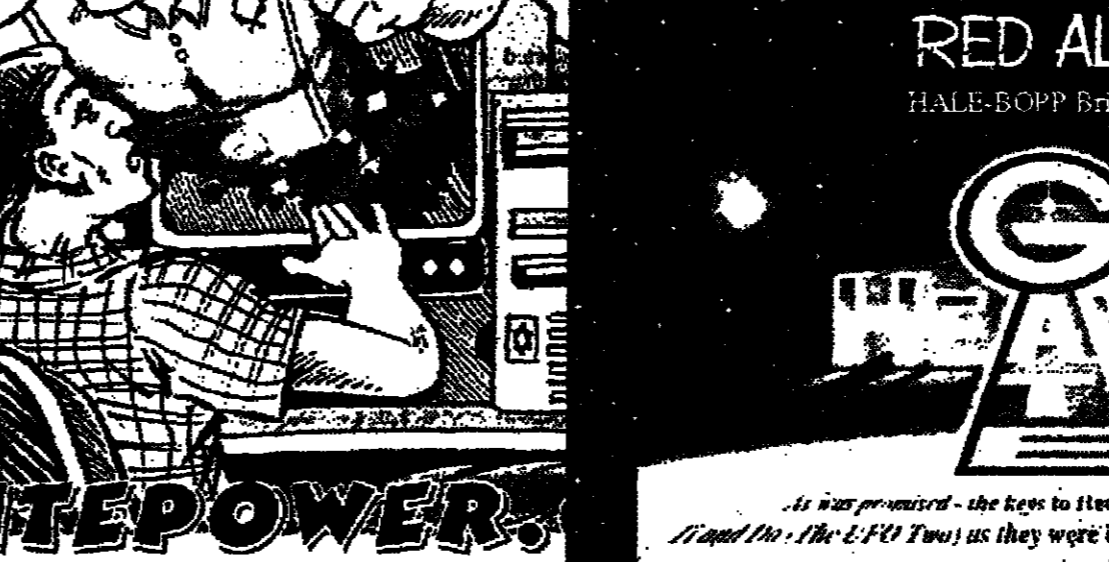
What's Your Pleasure?

INTERNET CRIME ARCHIVES



Digital Home of the Mass-Murdering Serial Killer

The John Gotti Tribute Page



These images from World Wide Web sites, ranging from the merely strange to the truly sinister, may explain why so many people now see the Internet as a menace, a labyrinth hiding the obsessions of pervers and cult leaders trying to snare impressionable minds and bodies.



more time to reach a general agreement. A compromise proposal is above all else, and once only the perennial debate over a few. That being the case, all the ingenuity of the peace team is now a chance!

The writer, a Third Worldist, is a mathematician professor at Orthodox University of Eilat.

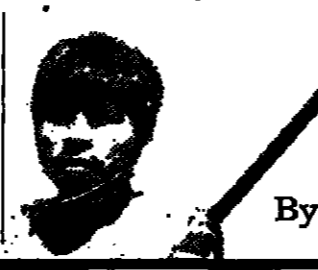
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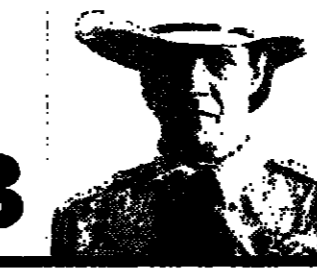
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Life Imitates Art
The latest trends in bank robbery.
By David Johnston **2**



Mexican Standoff
In the drug war, success hurts.
By Clifford Krauss **3**



Selling Taboos
Incest loses its power to shock.
By Karen De Witt **4**

The Really Silent Majority

What's on Russia's Mind?

By ALESSANDRA STANLEY

IT is perhaps a measure of the distance between ordinary people and the ruling elite in Russia that when a professional pollster is asked how Russians feel about NATO expansion, the pollster gives his own views first.

"There was a rare display of unity against NATO between the Government and its opposition, which to my mind was quite dangerous," said Yuri A. Levada, director of Vtsiom, one of Russia's oldest and most respected public opinion survey companies. "Yeltsin correctly broke away from this in Helsinki, but he will undoubtedly be blamed for it." Asked, again, what voters think, he replied: "Oh, NATO is of absolutely no importance to ordinary Russians. They have other, more pressing issues on their minds."

There is, in fact, a yawning gap between the Kremlin's preoccupations and those of ordinary citizens, and

it was on vivid display last week. On Wednesday, President Boris N. Yeltsin devoted his weekly radio address to defending his performance at the Helsinki summit. The next day, millions of Russian workers and pensioners marched and held rallies all over Russia to protest nonpayment of salaries, a debt worth \$8 billion.

Demonstrators were passionate and angry, but as a whole, the day of protest was milder than some had expected. The Kremlin was relieved and seemingly comforted by the low turnout. In Russia's peculiar form of democracy, officials measure public opinion largely by what citizens do not do or say.

A civil society requires, if not civility, at least some kind of conversation between voters and their representatives. The rule of fear and silence that kept Czarist and then Soviet Governments in power has been toppled, and Russians can vote against candidates who disappoint them. But in between elections, trust — the feeling that the Government is listening and is accountable to the

Continued on page 3



Russians, including this Communist supporter with accordion, staged protests to demand payment of wages.

The Nation

The Mystery of the Violent Bank Jobs



Associated Press

In Philadelphia in January, officials aired a video of a suspect in a bank-robbing gang.

By DAVID JOHNSTON

IN the 1996 movie "Heat," starring Al Pacino and Robert De Niro, a commando-style gang of heavily armed thugs dressed in full body armor storms a bank in California, terrorizing customers before fleeing in a wild gun battle with the police. In recent weeks, a rash of extremely violent bank robberies has left the authorities wondering whether a new era of bank robbers may be drawing inspiration from Hollywood's blood-soaked scripts.

The evidence is provocative. In Los Angeles three weeks ago, a group of bandits clad in black assault gear and carrying AK-47 assault rifles held up a Bank of America branch in North Hollywood. They splashed bullets into walls and ceilings and locked terrified customers and employees in a vault. After a 20-minute standoff with the police, the gang bolted for freedom, opening fire with a small arsenal of weapons at the

authorities, bystanders and television news helicopters whirring overhead. The toll: two robbers dead, three bystanders and six police officers wounded.

Two weeks later in Detroit, a man wearing full camouflage and singing the Lord's Prayer entered a branch of the Comerica bank armed with a shotgun. The robber opened fire, killing two bank employees and a hostage before scores of police officers gunned him down in a spray of bullets.

Copycats

A week after that in St. Louis, two men armed with M-16 rifles held up the Lindell Bank and Trust. The pair, clad in body armor, killed a bank guard and then fled, leading the police on a careening two-mile chase that ended when the pair crashed their van in a fiery wreck in a city park.

The spate of violent robberies has Federal law enforcement officials worrying about the possibility of copycats at a time when bank



A slain bank robbery suspect in North Hollywood: Highway-laced California has nearly half the nation's bank robberies.

Officials hoped bank robberies would fade as electronic banking spread. That was California dreaming.

robberies are sharply on the rise again after a five-year decline from a peak in 1992. Last year there were 7,562 bank jobs, nearly 10 percent more than in 1995. The total still falls below the record year of 1992, when there were 9,622 bank robberies.

Top officials at the Federal Bureau of Investigation said that despite the recent spurt of violent bank robberies, they have little overall evidence that takeover robberies, in which organized gangs take hostages with high-powered weapons, are anything but a frighteningly rare phenomenon — even though the incidence of such crimes has jumped in some communities in Texas, Florida and California.

"Most bank robberies are still note jobs," said William J. Esposito, the F.B.I.'s deputy director, referring to the typical bank-rob-

bing method, in which a robber steps up to a counter and passes a note to a teller demanding cash. In 1995, the last year for which the F.B.I. has complete statistics, about 48 percent of all bank robbers used firearms, but incidents of actual violence occurred in only 1 in 20 robberies — a figure that has been holding steady in recent years.

Before the recent surge, Federal officials had begun to hope that bank robbery was slowing with the advent of electronic banking, which reduced opportunities for robberies, and with improved security measures like exploding dye packs, security cameras and sophisticated alarms. The F.B.I. is preparing a new computerized data file profiling each robbery, which will permit investigators to link crimes throughout the country.

Highway Robbers

Even though there is a relatively low level of violence in most bank robberies, many people are killed, hurt or traumatized and millions of dollars are lost. In 1995, thieves got away with more than \$39 million in cash, securities and other valuables, of which only \$9.6 million was recovered. Worse, in 1995, 67 people were taken hostage, 20 were wounded and 16 others were killed — 13 of them perpetrators themselves. Law enforcement officials said they advise bank managers to teach employees not to resist an armed

robber. "The money is never worth a human life," said one official.

Nearly half the country's bank robberies take place in California, though it has only about 12 percent of the nation's population, because, Mr. Esposito said, the state has nearly unlimited branch banking and an extensive network of freeways that makes robbers believe that a getaway is possible.

"They can be 10 miles away in five minutes," he said.

Bank robbers are almost always men, and about 65 percent of the thieves are caught; more than half of those are subsequently found to be narcotics abusers. More robberies take place on Friday than any other day of the week (Monday is the second most popular day) and most bank jobs are likely to be committed between 9 A.M. and 11 A.M.

But the crime has changed since the F.B.I. made its reputation hunting down Depression-era bank robbers like Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow. There are so many heists now that the bureau takes only the biggest, most violent cases, leaving the rest to local authorities to investigate. But bank robbery remains a Federal violation, which law enforcement officials say helps explain why banks remain a tempting target. They say some professional criminals figure that if they are caught it would be better to wind up in the relative safety and comfort of a Federal prison than in a state lockup.

THE JERUSALEM POST **book** MUSIC department CLUB

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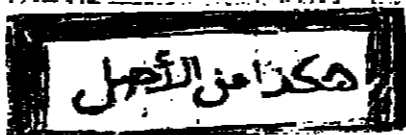
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The World

Fighting the Drug War With Boomerangs

By CLIFFORD KRAUSS

EVER since the Nixon Administration, Washington has been pressing Mexico to crack down on its marijuana and poppy fields. The results have been mixed, and now, over the last decade or so, something more pernicious has occurred.

Policies meant to push narcotics trafficking out of the Caribbean and destroy Colombia's Medellín and Cali cartels have produced the unwelcome side effect of funneling drugs through Mexico on their way to the rich American market.

As a result, the emerging Mexican cartels have grown richer, leaving a mounting toll of assassinations and corruption all the way from the steamy jungles of Tabasco to the ribald streets of Tijuana. "We push the drugs around," said Bruce Bagley, a professor of international relations at the University of Miami, "and new networks and new routes are established. As a result, we have overwhelmed Mexico's weak political and law enforcement institutions."

The Generals' Turn

Just in the last couple of months, the corrosive effect that drugs inevitably have on any society appears to have reached the upper echelons of the Mexican Army. Two Mexican generals have already been arrested — one of them the country's former drug czar, who had been privy to many of the most intimate details of Washington's anti-narcotics strategies.

These aren't just any high officials, either; corruption of the army is a development that threatens this country's gradual move toward democracy. As President Gonzalo Sánchez de Losada of Bolivia once put it: "When you have a corrupt chief of police, you fire him. When you have a corrupt chief of the army, he fires you."

Of course, there is no telling how strong the international cartels would be if it weren't for the efforts of United States law enforcement. Drug supplies might be even more plentiful and purer in the cities of North America, and prices even lower. Victories over traffickers in the Caribbean and Colombia have brought periodic spikes in cocaine prices in the United States over the last couple of decades that just might have persuaded some potential first-time users to buy a six-pack of beer instead.

Drugs, after all, are international commodities that follow the laws of economics. And however the sources of supply are



Mexican drug activity has grown as other supply points are squeezed. Mexican poppy-growing peasants during a feud with rivals.

squeezed or displaced, demand for one drug or another has been fairly steady in the United States in recent years, making supply the most important determinant of price.

The Mexican Government would like Washington to reverse that equation by doing something to change the continuing American taste for illegal highs.

The Clinton Administration, like its predecessors, would love to oblige but finds it difficult, to say the least. Its next effort, scheduled to be launched soon, is an aggressive media campaign to discourage teen-age drug use.

Unintended Results

In the meantime, the Mexican cartels are rapidly expanding internationally, according to the Drug Enforcement Administration. They are linking up with coca growers in Bolivia and Peru and violently seizing local drug markets in Los Angeles and across the southwestern United States.

The leaders of the competing Cali cartel in Colombia have suffered billions of dollars in losses already, but there is little they can do since they have been imprisoned in Colombia over the last two years as a result of pressure from Washington.

"I have seen firsthand how so many of our programs that we hoped would help can have unintended, adverse consequences," said Mathea Falco, who was Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics Matters in the Carter Administration.

Ms. Falco recalled that American pressure on South American governments to eradicate drug plants began at the end of the Carter years, and that as that policy blossomed through the 1980's, "it alienated and intensified tensions between the Peruvian Government and the peasants, helping the Sendero Luminoso guerrilla movement grow, and that's what is happening in Colombia now."

A metaphor, which has become a cliché in narcotics-control circles, describes the prob-

lem. It's called the "balloon effect": Squeeze a balloon in one spot and it billows out in another.

When the Nixon Administration closed down Turkey's "French Connection," heroin production spread to Burma, Pakistan and ultimately Afghanistan. When the Bush Administration urged Bolivia to eradicate coca plants on the eastern slopes of its Andean range, cultivation spread into Bolivia's Amazon Basin and into Brazil. When the Clinton Administration urged the Peruvian Air Force to intercept planes carrying raw coca to Colombia, traffickers began shipping their goods on the Amazon River and growing more coca in Colombia.

"Stop the traffickers on the ground, and they take to the air," sighed Gen. Enrique Salgado Cordero, chief of the Mexico City police. "Control the air, and they go by sea. It's a battle with no end."

Still, President Ronald Reagan had little choice but try to stem the flood of drugs that was pouring into Miami from the Caribbean



Mexico's new anti-drug chief, Mariano Herran Salvati, at a news conference.

in the early 1980's. Miami was plummeting into an abyss: its streets had become a battleground of dealers fighting for turf, its police force was corrupted by bribes, and the integrity of its banks was threatened by a deluge of laundered money.

The Reagan Administration unleashed the Coast Guard, the Navy, the Customs Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration to block the fleets of boats launched from Colombia that made their way to Miami through Jamaica, Haiti and the Bahamas. At the same time, pressure was exerted on Colombia to crack down on the Medellín cartel.

Shifting Gears

The operation was so successful that panicked Colombian drug lords first made war on their Government and then took refuge in Panama in 1984. With the help of Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, they rerouted their shipments out through Central America and Mexico. Once the Medellín mafia was crushed, the Cali cartel took up the slack with the help of emerging Mexican organized crime groups.

Miami was saved, but the police forces and militaries of Panama, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras were all corrupted to varying degrees. Drug corruption led to an American invasion in Panama, and now it appears to promise years of tensions between Washington and Mexico City.

And still, for all the international turmoil, cocaine and heroin prices in the United States keep dropping, and the potency of the drugs keeps rising.

Resentment in the South Seas

Yankee, Go Home. Send Cash.

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

THE President is in his customary place in the hotel bar, apparently inebriated and enjoying yet another pre-dinner drink, when he is asked about the United States. He frowns.

"You know, I was arrested by the United States," the President, Imata Kabua, slurs proudly, and he starts to tell the story of how he was detained in 1982 for protesting the American military presence at a base here. His drinking buddy, a local senator who is also more than a little unsteady, is repeating over and over: "I don't like America. I don't like America."

Thus this paradox of foreign aid: There is almost no place in the world where America, as America sees it, has been so generous as the Marshall Islands, a collection of coral atolls between Japan and Hawaii. Yet the local economy remains a shambles and the United States is broadly resented. Something went badly wrong, for usually it is possible to be resented without paying \$1 billion for the privilege.

An arrestingly beautiful collection of islets with a relaxed, friendly feeling and about 56,000 people, the Marshall Islands are about as American as a non-American place can be. The currency is American dollars, and although there is a local language, the newspaper is mostly published in English. The loose atmosphere is evident in the way President Kabua simply dines in the hotel with his buddies each evening, chatting with anyone who drops by. (To be sure, although Mr. Kabua was as cordial as he was tipsy, not everybody was pleased. Although the meeting had been approved ahead of time with Mr. Kabua's office and with the Foreign Minister, the Health Minister later called to threaten bodily harm and demand that any tape of the interview be destroyed.)

No Thanks

Under a treaty that is soon coming up for review, Washington gives the Marshall Islands millions in aid and even offers free access by all citizens to move to America for work or study. Yet, asked about the treaty, President Kabua scowled. "I don't like it," he said. "It shouldn't be renewed. It should be renegotiated, that's right. Renegotiated, not renewed."

From the American point of view, the treaty is enormously generous and any renewal — if it happens at all — will be on much less favorable terms. From the perspective of the Marshalls, the United States has been bullying this little country for decades, and it finally will be forced to treat the Marshalls with some respect.



On Ejit, an atoll in the Marshall Islands, Kelen Joash plays with his grandchildren.

The Marshalls, like two nearby island countries, Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia, were Japanese possessions that effectively became an American colony after World War II. They became independent in the 1980's, but their economies now depend on the current treaty with Washington, known in each case as a "compact of free association." Over the last decade or so, about \$2.4 billion has been appropriated for these three countries, or a total of about \$13,000 per inhabitant.

In both the Marshalls and the Federated States of Micronesia, the compact expires in 2001. The problem for the islands is that they have lost their strategic advantage. When the compacts were negotiated, Washington was afraid the Soviet Union would sign up one of the island countries as a client state, a prospect that now seems ridiculous.

"The compacts were negotiated during the cold war," Aurelia E. Brazeal, a deputy assistant secretary of state for the region, pointedly told a Congressional subcommittee in the fall.

The United States has a military base in Kwajalein, one of the Marshall Islands, that it uses to monitor space operations and missile tests. But there may be pressure to close the base, and in any case the United States can keep it until 2016 even if the compact as a whole is not renewed.

To gain a bit of leverage, the Marshall Islands is threatening to allow China to set up a naval base on its territory. "China is getting bigger and bigger in this region, and

I'm sure that the United States would not like to see them here," warned Phillip Muller, the Foreign Minister. In Washington, the threat provokes less alarm than mirth.

Almost everybody, American and Marshallese, complains that the Micronesian countries have become far too dependent on American aid. Yet if the United States did not renew the compact and cut off aid, the result would be a fiscal disaster.

"We might not have a Government to run," said Alvin Jacklick, a senator. By far the largest part of Government revenue comes from American payments.

The islanders make the point that not all the money is aid. Much of it is a negotiated payment for military cooperation or for past offenses, like spraying radiation on local citizens during nuclear tests.

The broader challenge for all the Pacific island countries is to figure out how they can compete economically in the modern world. These countries have gorgeous atolls and an alluring lifestyle, but few ways to generate hard currency other than sales of postage stamps to collectors and occasional tourism.

Still, experts do point to ways that the island countries can bolster their economies. Joan M. Plaisted, the American Ambassador, noted some opportunities to develop eco-tourism, sport fishing and diving in the Marshalls. A scuba diver herself, she raves about the underwater environment.

"You're almost guaranteed to see sharks," she said enthusiastically, quickly adding: "And most of them are friendly."

Gauging the Opinions Of a Silent Majority

Continued From Page 1

public — is very rare.

There are now dozens of polling firms in Russia that sample people's views on everything from tax reform to toothpaste. Advertisers use television ratings to determine what products to hawk, and where. Foreign manufacturers, who buy most of the television advertising, are deeply interested in what Russian consumers want.

Democracy, however, is still lagging behind. Russian society simply does not provide ordinary people much of a forum to articulate their views. "In my business, we can't measure public opinion; the best we can do is sample the public mood," said one well-known pollster, Nugzar Betanell. "Newspaper readership is down, people don't watch news programs anymore, they don't have town halls." They are, he added, "totally isolated from government."

A Missed Message

So the Kremlin was free to read into Thursday's protest a message that people aren't doing so badly after all. "People who haven't been paid in four or five months; normally they should die of starvation," said Aleksei Volin, a deputy director of the Kremlin's media directorate. "If they don't, it means that they have other, hidden sources of income — trade, personal businesses. If they are not storming barricades, it means the nonpayment crisis is not as dramatic as we think."

There is some truth to the notion that many people who have not been paid for months have found hidden ways to make ends meet. But there are also other ways to interpret the lackluster day of protest.

"People saw it as the same old power struggle between the Government and the opposition," Mr. Betanell argued. "They don't think it is about them, or will help them. But this is not good for the Government. It's a sign of demoralization and deep disillusionment with politics."

Exploring citizens' concerns — let alone heeding them — is, of course, a developing art in post-Communist Russia. In Soviet society, there was no need to measure public opinion; officially, dissent didn't exist.

In his quest to loosen the party's sclerotic grip on society, the last Soviet leader, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, ordered the first public opinion polls in 1987, to gauge how his reforms were being received. He was horrified to learn that the masses whom he had personally freed to speak up didn't speak highly of him. He stopped asking.

During the Russian election campaign last spring, President Yeltsin's team relied heavily on focus groups to figure out ways to sell their message. The Kremlin still does its own public opinion polling — much of it

consisting of surveys of the views of political elites in the provinces — and during the campaign, the Kremlin even installed a special phone number voters could call to record their thoughts and desires on an answering machine. But that was unplugged after Mr. Yeltsin was re-elected.

Particularly in politics, opinions are formed from the top down. Journalists are more or less free now to write what they want — but most prefer to write what they or their high-placed sources think, not what they have seen or reported. The polling firm Vox Populi produces a monthly list of the 150 top Russian political figures. The list is based on the opinions of two dozen columnists, sociologists and political figures.

Many Russians still have a hazy notion of what they are owed by their elected representatives. This is partly because old habits die hard. Many Russians still view their elected representative as the equivalent of the local party boss — someone to petition for help with a housing problem or work grievance, not as their voice in Moscow. Confusion works both ways. Asked how much time staff members spend with constituents who come to the office, Tatyana G. Dubova, a local aide to Oleg Gombarov, a member of parliament from Novosibirsk, tartly replied: "What's the point of talking? Aren't their views clear? We already know all the moods and problems of people."

The Soldiers' Mothers Committee, a grass-roots organization that was born during the Afghan war and lobbied intensely against the war in Chechnya, is one of the few public interest groups in Russia to have made a dent in the system. Through sheer will power, it has forced officials and members of parliament to pay attention.

Maneuverings

Valeria Melnikova, director of the Moscow office, said the committee had also found ways to make good use of some deputies' less exemplary connections. "They have contacts with banks and commercial enterprises," she said. "We have a kid in Krasnodarsky Krai who needs a prosthetic leg. It costs \$2,800. For these kinds of people, it's nothing. We'll find the money."

But that kind of skillful maneuvering is rare. Mostly, people are baffled by a democracy they feel excluded from. A 35-year-old tram driver from Grozny named Sergei who was injured in Chechnya went to the parliament last week in the far-fetched hope of asking the Communist leader Gennadi A. Zyuganov for help finding housing. He did not get past the guards.

Asked about the relationship between voters and their representatives, he shrugged. "The relationship is very simple," he said. "They have everything. I have nothing. They drive in limousines. I walk."

Ideas & Trends

Incest as a Selling Point

By KAREN DE WITT

OEDIPUS blinded himself when he learned that he had slept with his mother. Moll Flanders, Daniel Defoe's much-wed 18th-century heroine, rejects happiness when she discovers that her third husband is her brother. The lovers of D. W. Griffith's "A Baby's Shoe" become priest and nun upon learning that they are siblings.

That was in 1910. In 1996, the reunited lovers of John Sayles's "Lone Star," after finding out that they have the same father, continue their affair.

If a dozen movies, television dramas and memoirs are any indication, incest, one of humanity's last taboos, is taboo no longer. Incest is the plat du jour in

This taboo is now openly explored in a spate of new books and movies.

the 90's marketplace, the sudden Zeitgeist zapping a jaded American audience. What's more, the new permutations make this societal crime seem almost ordinary. Gee, one almost hears someone say, doesn't every family have this skeleton in the closet?

In addition to the Sayles movie, the plots of several upcoming movies — "The House of Yes," "This World, Then the Fireworks" and "The Locusts" — turn on incest. And the buzz on "The Kiss," Kathryn Harrison's new memoir for Random House, is not about the book's overall quality but about the author's revelation that she had sex with her father, not as an unwilling child but as a woman of 20.

"Incest has such incredible currency today largely because of ambush television and mid-afternoon shame programs," said James B. Twitchell, a professor of English at the University of Florida, who wrote "Forbidden Partners: The Incest Taboo in Modern Culture" (Columbia University Press, 1987). "In a highly competitive entertainment world, this is one that will quickly grab you."

Incest as a literary theme first erupted at the beginning of the 19th century as part of romantic interest in intense relationships. Mr. Twitchell said. Byron, Shelley and Poe all wrote about the subject.

"Nothing could have been more intensely hyperbolic than the brother-sister relationship," he said. "It was essentially an idealized sibling incest, and there is some reason to believe that Byron's incestuous relation with his sister, Augusta, was really a cover-up for a homosexual relationship, incest being more palatable than homosexuality at the time."

An obvious reason behind the current trend, he said, is the women's movement, the notion of a victim class exploited by a male power structure. "But there is a much more efficient reason," Mr. Twitchell said. "The major consuming audience of film, television and books is still in emotional adolescence, and to this audience incest is absolutely riveting."

Whether the incest theme is a sign of society's decline or a marketing device, it is as old as the biblical injunction against it. "Incest is in the foundations of Western drama," said Tom Gunning, a professor in the cinema and media program in the art department at



The plot of the John Sayles movie "Lone Star" revolves around lovers who discover they are related.

the University of Chicago. "But to discover a familial relationship and go, 'So what?' That's relatively new."

"Chinatown," Roman Polanski's 1974 film with Jack Nicholson, and Faye Dunaway as a victim of incest, played out tragically. The victim herself is killed. By ending in tragedy, most stories reinforce the notion of divine retribution.

There is, however, no thunderbolt at the end of "Lone Star." Mr. Gunning sees the seeming nonchalance of the lovers as more of an allegory about Anglo and Mexican-American relations than a true endorsement of incest. "The idea is that they're all in it together — whites and Mexicans — and can't sort it out," he said. "It's a metaphor for the racial situation."

Beyond the Pale

But Thomas Doherty, associate professor of film studies at Brandeis University, said the appearance of incest in entertainment was an outgrowth of "greater sexual explicitness in general." Mr. Doherty is at work on a book titled "Pre-Code Hollywood: Immorality and Insurrection in American Cinema, 1930-1934." "If one talks about what is still beyond the pale," he said, "there is only child molestation, bestiality and incest."

Hollywood toyed with the theme of incest before the 1930 Motion Picture Production Code, he said. Still, movies like "Scarface" in 1932, with Paul Muni as the hood with a lust for his sister, and "Unashamed," with

Robert Young as a jealous brother who kills his sister's husband, used heavy hints, not explicit sex.

The use of incest as entertainment, particularly when it is presented as morally neutral, troubles David Beatty, acting executive director of the National Victims Center, a national nonprofit organization in Arlington, Va., that helps victims of violence. "In most cases when you're talking about incest, there is nothing romantic about it," he said. "What you're talking about is two victims. If we start accepting incest as a literary motif, we lose public outrage, and when we lose that, we start to condone it. I find it very troubling."

Troubling, if not trivializing, Linda Katherine Cutting's "Memory Slips" (HarperCollins, 1997) details the lifelong wounds her minister father inflicted on her as a child. Ms. Harrison's book, which she says she wrote quickly in a "white heat," seems almost self-indulgent next to Ms. Cutting's memoir. Yet Ms. Cutting, a concert pianist, has done little promotion for the book, said Jane Bein, director of publicity for HarperCollins. "It's too hard for her to relive the tragedy of it all each time," she said.

Ms. Cutting, who once tried to kill herself, did not think of writing a book until she met a psychiatrist who had lost most of his family in the Holocaust. His message: "Stay alive so you can tell." Bearing witness, she writes, has enabled her to "restore honor to the memory of others who have survived as well as those who haven't."

Reaffirming the Sentimental

Year of the Unusual Usual Oscars

By JANET MASLIN

THIS was the year of the "Liar, Liar" Oscars. Like Jim Carrey in his latest film, participants showed a weird compulsion to blurt out the awful truth. "Thank you all for dropping by on the way to the party," said Arthur Hiller, the president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, acknowledging how media attention to the surrounding hoopla has increasingly eclipsed the awards themselves.

"Who are you people?" Billy Crystal joked about the ceremony's preponderance of new faces. In a year when a screenwriting Oscar turned Billy Bob Thornton from Hollywood's Zelig to one of its Cinderellas, that seemed a fair question.

"You know you've entered new territory when you realize that your outfit cost more than your film," said

Winners like 'Shine' and 'Sling Blade' were conventional at heart...

Jessica Yu, picking up her Oscar. (One look at the iron lung from her documentary short film and it was clear, during this "My Left Foot"/"Shine" era, that Ms. Yu was a likely winner.)

"I thought Lauren was going to get it and I think she deserves it," said the best supporting actress, Juliette Binoche, showing more grace than the camera that repeatedly peered at a crestfallen Lauren Bacall.

"Thank Michael Ondaatje," the director Anthony Minghella could be heard urging the producer Saul Zaentz, when the writer without whom "The English Patient" would have been impossible was temporarily forgotten amid that film's Oscar sweep.

"Wow," said Mr. Crystal, who attained his place in host heaven this year with the funniest Oscar film montage in memory (he did a fabulous job of inserting himself into the year's top films). "The way things are going, aside from wheat and auto parts, America's biggest export is now the Oscar."

Though Steve Martin pretended to confuse films with videocassettes and Debbie Reynolds claimed she had taken to her bed for two weeks after missing out on a best actress nomination, the evening's most revealing bit of candor came from Mr. Hiller. "We in the Academy propose an arrangement with you," he grandly told the audience. "You keep going to the movies and we'll keep making them!"

Is that Hollywood's best offer? Throughout the



This year's Oscars seemed to reward the unusual, but offbeat actresses like Courtney Love, star of "The People vs. Larry Flynt," were ignored.

evening, there were real and repeated signs of uncertainty about the movies' ability to sustain their magic and continue to command attention. Mr. Crystal sang mischievously about "Secrets and Lies" as if it were as peppy as "The Brady Bunch" and of Fargo as if it were Frank Sinatra's kind of town.

To the tune of "Saturday Night at the Movies," a montage showed images of thrilled, delighted moviegoers transfixed by wide-screen spectacle. But what were they watching with such wild excitement last year?

Cows flying in tornadoes? Explosions on Alcatraz? Billy Bob?

Though 1996 was widely proclaimed to be the year independent cinema outshone studio film making, the Oscar vote revealed how little has actually changed. "The English Patient" deserved its billing as out of the Hollywood mainstream, as a brilliant literary adaptation and ravishing wide-screen epic, but some of the year's supposedly offbeat films, like "Shine" and "Sling Blade" and even "Secrets and Lies," were safely conventional at heart. However skillfully acted, in the end they reaffirmed the easy, familiar and sentimental.

Meanwhile, a studio film with real daring, "The People vs. Larry Flynt," proved much too hot for the Academy to handle. Sabotaged by valid though not entirely relevant complaints about Hustler magazine, it was reviled for taking the liberties that separate dramas from documentaries. But Mr. Flynt, who made

... but 'The People vs. Larry Flynt' proved too hot to handle.

his way to the Oscar show uninvited and was seen crowing on camera, can thank his own penchant for gloating public appearances for much of the image problem Milos Forman's film encountered.

The closest thing to an iconoclastic studio film at the Oscars was "Jerry Maguire," which showed sweetness, originality and the temerity to re-examine the very values that Hollywood holds dear. And unfashionably attractive Tom Cruise carried that film with a subtle, revealing performance that will be fresh long after this Oscar show has faded from memory.

It happens that Geoffrey Rush delivered an uncanny impersonation of the pianist David Helfgott in "Shine," but still Mr. Cruise was robbed. While Academy voters clung to their most threadbare ideas about the sanctity of wounded innocence, Mr. Cruise gave the performance of his increasingly substantial career and did a lot to keep the film industry afloat. It would have been an act of smart Darwinism for the Oscars to acknowledge that contribution.

The Oscar show featured an especially sad eulogy montage this year, with glimpses of recently deceased directors, writers and producers as well as great stars (including a heart-tugging final image of Marcello Mastroianni). With particular eloquence, the Academy said goodbye to the past and some of its best. Now where is the future?

Scared About The Internet

Continued From Page 1

acreege has been staked and furrowed for such respectable activities as collaborating on the Human Genome Project or trading recipes for German chocolate cake.

In the public mind — molded by news reports on the old media, which are still more powerful and pervasive than anything on line — the Internet is starting to seem like a scary place, a labyrinth of electronic tunnels hiding activities and obsessions as disturbing and seedy as anything Thomas Pynchon has dreamed up.

Real or imagined, such feelings are ripe for political exploitation. This became clear when Congress debated and hastily passed the Communications Decency Act of 1996, which makes it a crime to leave indecent material out on the Net where children can find it. Earlier this month, the Clinton Administration — the very same Administration that promised to put every child on line — went before the Supreme Court to defend the act, which was held unconstitutional by lower courts. A lawyer for the Administration described the Internet as "a revolutionary means for displaying sexually explicit, patently offensive material to children in the privacy of their own homes," of giving "every child a free pass to every adult bookstore and video store."

As the now famous New Yorker cartoon put it, "On the Internet nobody knows that you're a dog" — or an 8-year-old closing the window on the Sesame Street site to click over to alt.sex.necrophilia. Now the Justices are left to ponder whether the Internet should be treated like the telephone, on which you should be allowed to say anything, or like television, where content can be restricted for the public good.

In the meantime, the Heaven's Gate suicides can only amplify fears that, in some quarters, may be already bordering on hysteria. The Internet, it seems, might be used to lure children not only to shopping malls, where some sicko awaits, but into joining U.F.O. cults. From listening to some people's fears, one would think that Internet bandwidth had increased to the point where a distant evil hacker could download your mind.

As in the never-ending debates about television and violence, raised now to a new hyperactive plane, the question is this: Is the Internet a source of cultural

The Internet is the best incubator yet of ideas, both ennobling and debased.

sickness or just its reflection? And as with television, cause and effect cannot be so easily untwisted. A country where murder is frighteningly common naturally gives rise to TV dramas about violence. And exposing millions of minds to fictional killing night after night might help create a climate in which violence is more likely to occur. The effect is nonlinear, like the reverberative howl arising from a microphone held too close to a loudspeaker.

On the Net everyone can reach out and touch at random, in a way that's somewhat different from blindly dialing digits on a telephone pad. The Internet is the most efficient incubator yet of ideas both ennobling and debased. Each computer terminal is a shiny surface, reflecting not just things in the real world but things in the simulated reality of the Internet.

In this wilderness-of-mirrors, a single string of mutant thoughts can be replicated over and over, distorted in the Internet funhouse until the result is impossible to untangle. Somehow the slick design of Web pages — so easily accomplished with a few dabs of Java and a cursory knowledge of the computer language called HTML — adds credence to outlandish ideas.

Confusing medium and message in a way that might have made Marshall McLuhan sick, people don't want to remember the obvious: that all the alarming things on the Internet have been around forever.

In late February, when a Nobel prize-winning scientist, Dr. Daniel Carleton Gajdusek, pleaded guilty to a charge of child molestation, news accounts zeroed in on the fact that he was snared in a Federal investigation of child pornography on the Internet. Dr. Gajdusek didn't meet the boy he admitted molesting in a cyberspace chat-room. But investigators apparently became suspicious of the scientist after they noticed Internet pedophiles discussing journals — published by the National Institutes of Health — in which he mentioned his sexual encounters with boys in Micronesia.

Bo, Peep and the Sheep

Slight as the Internet connection really was, it seemed to add to the seediness of the situation — one more shred in an accumulating pile of evidence that there are networks of people lurking out there with alien values, and that anyone, any age, might stumble onto them with a mouse click.

Not all the connections are so thinly drawn. A month after the scientist's guilty plea, a man in Long Island was accused by the Suffolk County District Attorney of using the Internet to conspire with an accomplice in North Carolina to take turns raping, torturing and sodomizing a 14-year-old girl. The very next day a Minnesota prison inmate was indicted by a Federal grand jury for conspiring to traffic in child pornography over the Internet. Among the bytes on his disk was an annotated list of thousands of children from small towns in Minnesota: "latchkey kids," "cute," "Little Ms. pageant winner."

The Long Island case is horrible enough that it would have made news even if the accused men had talked on the telephone or exchanged postcards. But would the case of the Minnesota prisoner have seemed quite so sensational if he had kept his list in a spiral notebook? Corrections officials said at the time that there was no evidence that the children's names had actually been distributed over the Internet.

As early as 1975, the leaders of Heaven's Gate, Bo and Peep, were recruiting lost souls. And back then, the most powerful personal computers available were Texas Instrument pocket calculators.

"The Two," as they also called themselves, drew the curious to meetings by posting notices with thumbtacks and wood. Maybe the Internet, with its ability to rapidly and efficiently bring together a hodgepodge of miscreants, was an important part of the group's later devolution. But it may be just as reasonable to blame the from the chalice of their strange religion.

In the end, maybe the uneasy feelings about the Internet come from seeing all the old plagues and sins recast in an unfamiliar new form. An ancient accumulation of inchoate fears has become focused inside this high-profile medium, made more easily touchable — and, it's tempting to believe, easier to control.

ECONOMY

The New Road to Riches is Paved With Options

Investor activism lifts executive pay.

By JUDITH H. DOBRZYNSKI

DAY by day, as one corporation after another discloses what it paid its chief executive for 1996, investors are ruefully being reminded of that old adage: Be careful what you wish for, because you might get it.

What they wanted was pay for performance. That, the theory went, would rein in exorbitant payouts, especially to the undeserving.

Today, compensation for top executives is a little more closely aligned with performance, but it is higher, and rising faster, than ever.

Bowing to investor pressure, companies in recent years stopped automatically giving their top executives hefty annual raises and began handing out big packages of stock options, which allow the purchase of company stock at preferential prices if the share price rises.

But investors never anticipated the stock market's meteoric rise. Combined with the size of the option awards, the market's advance has delivered a stunning windfall to corporate chieftains almost regardless of individual performance. While the average worker got a meager 3.3 percent raise in 1996, top executives again enjoyed double-digit increases, often approaching 20 percent or more, pay experts say.

By comparison, corporate profits increased 11 percent for the year.

The grand totals dwarf the sums of previous years. Green Tree Financial paid its chief executive, Lawrence M. Coss, a package of cash, bonus and stock options worth \$102 million, up from \$65 million in 1995. I.B.M. gave its chairman, Louis V. Gerstner Jr., a package worth \$20.2 million, up from \$15.6 million in 1995. And General Electric rewarded its chairman, John F. Welch Jr., with a package worth \$30 million, up from \$22.5 million in 1995.

Over all, "cash compensation will be up 10 percent to 15 percent, and total direct compensation, including stock, will be up even more, 15 percent or 20 percent, for C.E.O.'s of the largest companies," predicted Ira Kay, director of the compensation practice for Watson Wyatt Worldwide, a consulting firm.

Exactly how 1996 shaped up will not be known for weeks, because many companies have yet to report. But a study of chief executives' pay at 215 large companies that had filed

their annual financial statements by March 24 confirms Mr. Kay's expectations. Their median total pay — salary, bonus, the estimated present value of stock option grants and all other compensation — climbed 19.9 percent in 1996, according to Diego Crystal, a pay expert in San Diego who conducted the analysis.

Executive pay seems to rise inexorably. "What has surprised me is how little impact shareholder activists have had in this area," said John C. Wilcox, chairman of Georgeson & Company, which specializes in soliciting shareholder votes. "Egregious compensation has gone from bad to worse, and nothing seems to tame it."

That is just a slight overstatement. Pay is sliding a little for a handful of executives. At Boise Cascade, for example, George J. Harad, the chief executive, saw his total compensation, including options, drop to just over \$1.7 million from \$2.7 million in 1995.

But any declines were rare until shareholders started pressing for a link between pay and performance. Now many companies keep executive salary increases minimal and reward executives with other kinds of pay tied to various performance measures. Cash bonuses, for example, are most commonly linked to goals for growth in earnings per share or after-tax income. Stock options are meant to give an incentive to increase the company's share price.

With option grants, an executive receives the right to purchase at some point in the future a certain number of shares at a price set when the options are issued. As the stock price rises, the options become increasingly valuable. If the stock falls or goes nowhere, the options are worthless. Executives cannot rack up huge gains unless shareholders also do well.

What started as a good thing, however, may be getting out of hand. Option grants are becoming "larger and larger," said Robert Salwen, president of the Executive Compensation Corporation, a consulting firm in New York. "They used to call them jumbo awards, but the jumbo is becoming the norm."

Mr. Crystal found that the median value of option grants jumped 27.9 percent last year, while the median increase in salary and bonus was 7 percent. The stock market, as measured by the Standard & Poor's 500-stock index, rose 23 percent.

Salary now matters less and less to top corporate executives. At 56 large companies that had reported through February, salary accounted for just 22 percent of the chief executives' total 1996 pay, down from 27 percent in 1995, according to Executive Compensation Reports, a newsletter.

The Big Winners in the Options Derby

The chief executives who were paid the most in the form of stock options in 1996, or who gained the most paper wealth from the rising value of options they held, based on a review of 215 large public companies that had reported 1996 results by March 24. Figures are in millions.

Table with columns: CHIEF EXECUTIVE, COMPANY, CASH COMPENSATION 1995, CASH COMPENSATION 1996, STOCK OPTIONS 1995, STOCK OPTIONS 1996. Includes names like Michael D. Eisner, Robert B. Shapiro, Louis V. Gerstner Jr.

Cash compensation includes salary, bonus and other compensation. New options are listed at their value on Dec. 31 of the year of grant. Mr. Eisner's 1996 cash compensation includes a 1996 bonus of \$10 million and a 1996 stock option grant of \$181 million.

GAINED THE MOST ON OPTIONS

Table with columns: CHIEF EXECUTIVE, COMPANY, RISE IN WEALTH (ON PAPER) FROM OPTIONS IN 1996. Includes names like Stephen M. Case, Eckhard Pfeiffer, Roberto C. Goizueta.

Options made up 45 percent of the total, up from 40 percent in 1995. The remainder came from annual cash bonuses, incentive pay tied to multi-year goals and outright awards of stock that cannot be sold until a certain amount of time passes.

"Salary has never before been such a small portion of pay," said Diane D. Posnack, a managing director at Pearl Meyer & Partners, a pay consulting firm. "Nor have we ever seen such a large part of C.E.O. pay dependent on stock market performance."

John S. Reed, the chairman of Citicorp, exemplifies the shift. His salary and bonus declined to \$3.5 million in 1996, from \$4.3 million in 1995, as the banking company went, a spokesman said, "from an exceptional year to a good year." But Mr. Reed got options for 182,000 shares, up from 100,000 in 1995.

He has done well with options in the past. Last June 21, he cashed in options granted earlier for 679,000 shares of Citicorp stock. Mr. Reed did not sell the shares, but if he had, his profit would have been \$40 million. Some of those options, granted in 1987, carried a price as low as \$14.25 a share, and others, granted in 1993, had a price as high as \$31.75. Citicorp's stock had soared to \$80.50 last June. It is now at \$111.

While overall pay is somewhat better attuned to performance, investors are paying a price. To compensate for the bigger risk associated with options, executives generally get big grants. "Many of the pack-

ages are astounding," said Alyssa M. Machold, deputy director of the Council of Institutional Investors.

The most astronomical numbers emanated from the Walt Disney Company, where the chairman, Michael D. Eisner, received \$8.7 million in salary and bonus last year, plus stock options that are today valued at \$181 million. That is the largest single grant in corporate history, though it was his first grant since 1989.

Even that number looks Mickey Mouse compared with the future value of Mr. Eisner's option grant — \$583.7 million in 2007, as estimated by Mr. Crystal using a commonly accepted valuation model that anticipates the price of Disney's stock at the most likely time the options would be exercised. (Mr. Crystal, a former consultant who no longer counsels companies made an exception last year and advised Mr. Eisner on pay issues at Disney.)

No one else comes close to Mr. Eisner, but other awards are mighty impressive. At Monsanto, Robert B. Shapiro, the chief executive, was given options with a present value of \$17.5 million and a future value estimated at \$49 million. Ralston Purina's chief executive, William P. Stritz, was granted options with an estimated value of \$12.1 million today and \$31.3 million in the future.

Because of the market's rise, 1996 was a banner year for option holders, at least on paper. Stephen M. Case, the chief executive of America Online, saw his paper wealth from options alone grow by \$79.5 million, Mr. Crystal said. The paper wealth

from options held by Eckhard Pfeiffer, chief executive of Compaq Computer, jumped by \$62.7 million, and Roberto C. Goizueta, the chairman of Coca-Cola, had an increase in wealth attributed solely to options of \$61.4 million. Others were not far behind.

The immense wealth of many executives these days in part reflects a sharp improvement in American competitiveness and fatter profits. But executive pay is nonetheless giving some knowledgeable people pause. "The question," said Thomas J. Neff, chairman of the United States operations of Spencer Stuart, the big executive recruiting firm, "is whether these humongous packages are justified even when performance is up. Who would have guessed a few years ago that the market would go this high?"

Mr. Neff added: "I suspect that boards are getting a little bit nervous about the outcome of option grants they gave a few years ago."

The more options a company hands out, the more shares it must issue. As a result, the company must spread its earnings more widely, diluting the ownership, dividends and voting power of existing investors.

In 1995 alone, companies set aside 11 percent of their total shares for stock option grants, according to a recent survey of 1,353 companies by Watson Wyatt. Five years ago, that number was more like 6 percent, Mr. Kay estimates. The Investor Responsibility Research Center, a nonprofit organization, recently said that shareholders at 435 companies among the Standard & Poor's 500 would lose 9.2 percent of their ownership on average from option plans in place and reported through last summer.

Already, options are distorting the profit picture. Profits at many companies are overstated because provisions for options do not have to be charged against earnings. This year, for the first time, companies will have to disclose how options may affect earnings per share — though only diligent readers of footnotes will be the wiser.

Options are so popular that hundreds of companies now spread them down to middle managers and production workers as an inducement to raise productivity. Nearly everyone has accepted broad-based option plans without debate. "They are motherhood, apple pie and Chevrolet," said Patrick S. McGurn, a vice president at Institutional Shareholder Services Inc., a consultant to large investors.

But critics complain that the broader use of options can be a smoke screen to hide what top executives are getting. "They say it's a big increase because it's a broad-based plan now," Mr. McGurn said, "but the bulk of the options go to the top executives." Indeed, the Watson Wyatt survey of 1,353 companies found that, on average, 29 percent of

the options the companies granted in 1995 went to their top five executives.

Making matters worse, companies may not, in the end, let their executives' pay rest almost entirely on the fate of the market. "What happens if the market goes down?" Mr. McGurn asked. Frequently, companies lower the price at which the options can be used to buy stock.

The Linear Technology Corporation, a California maker of integrated circuits, provides a recent example. After its stock slid last summer to \$21.75, the company lowered the price at which its chief executive could buy shares from options he received in 1995 to \$24.75 a share from \$34.125. Linear's share price is now \$46.

At some point, the bears on Wall Street will overtake the bulls and the market will drop. Then, "the pressure to reprice these options will be enormous," Mr. McGurn said. "It's one thing if it's an executive vice president who doesn't get his reward, but it's another thing if it's every employee. They'll say, 'This is what I was going to use to pay for the kids' braces; this is what I was going to use to pay for the car,' and that will change the dynamics of the argument."

With the market soaring, investors have yet to focus on repricing. But executive pay issues continue to fester. According to the Investor Responsibility Research Center, various shareholders, mostly individuals and unions, have so far filed 107 shareholder proposals addressing executive pay for consideration at annual meetings this spring. Last year, the total was 67.

Many such resolutions, however, have been rejected by the companies involved, with the Securities and Exchange Commission agreeing that the filings were flawed in one way or another. Shareholders and pay experts alike acknowledge that no one has designed a resolution that gets at the real problem.

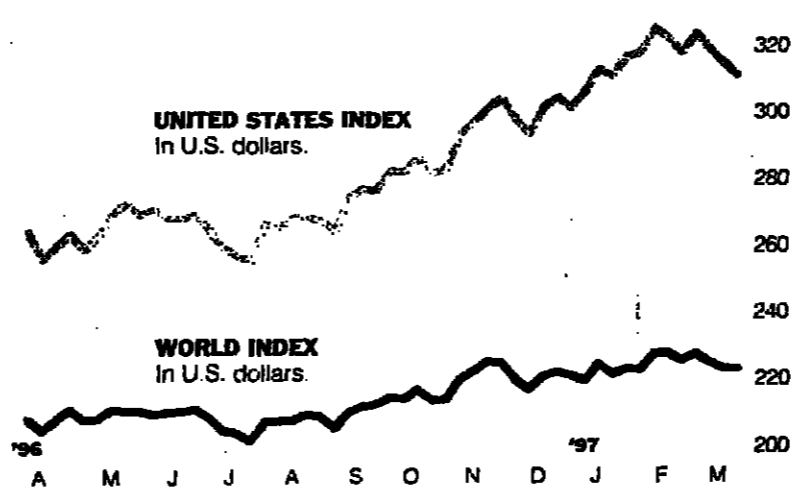
"There are two issues in pay — how and how much," said Frederic W. Cook, a pay consultant in New York. "The 'how' is in pretty good shape. Executives are being paid right, but they are being paid a hell of a lot of money."

Still, reining in the amounts pocketed by executives would require another restructuring of the way they are paid, several experts said — though none seems to know a better way to do it. "The system is working as designed," said Pearl Meyer, the pay consultant. "But I fault the design. There should be a meaningful difference between pay for business performance and pay for stock market performance."

That, however, would mark a return to a more arbitrary and more subjective system, and a more distant link to shareholder return.

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

Table with columns: PERFORMANCE IN U.S. DOLLARS, IN LOCAL CURR., COMPOSITE INDICES. Includes rows for Country, Index, Week % Chg, YTD % Chg, Dividend Yield, and Composite Indices like Europe, Pacific Basin, etc.



Week-end figures are Thursday closes except Italy, Japan, Malaysia and Thailand (Friday). Prepared by Goldman, Sachs & Co. using data derived from the Financial Times/Standard & Poor's Actuaries World Indices, a measure of stock market performance. The FT indices are compiled jointly by The Financial Times Limited, Goldman, Sachs & Co. and Standard & Poor's, in conjunction with the Institute of Actuaries and Faculty of Actuaries.

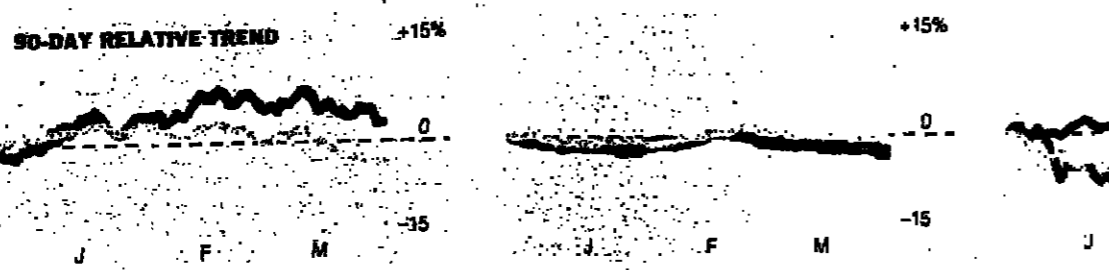
Table with columns: Exchange rates, Thursday, Last Friday, Week % Chg, Year Ago. Includes rates for Japanese yen to the U.S. dollar, German marks to the U.S. dollar, etc.

Source: Bloomberg Financial Markets, exchange rates as of Thursday's New York close.

UPS AND DOWNS

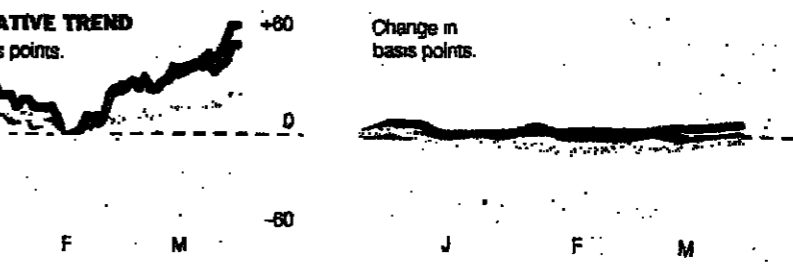
March 24-28: As the Fed Raises Rates, Stocks and Bonds Fall

Table with columns: PRICES, DOMESTIC EQUITIES, DOMESTIC BONDS, AROUND THE WORLD. Includes data for Broad market, Blue chips, Small capitalization, Treasuries, Municipals, Corporates, European stocks, Asian stocks, Gold.



YIELDS

Table with columns: BONDS, OTHER INVESTMENTS. Includes yields for Long bonds, 30-year Treasuries, Notes, 2-year Treasuries, Municipals, Money market funds, Taxable average, Bank C.D.'s, 1-year small savers, Stocks, S. & P. 500 dividend yield.



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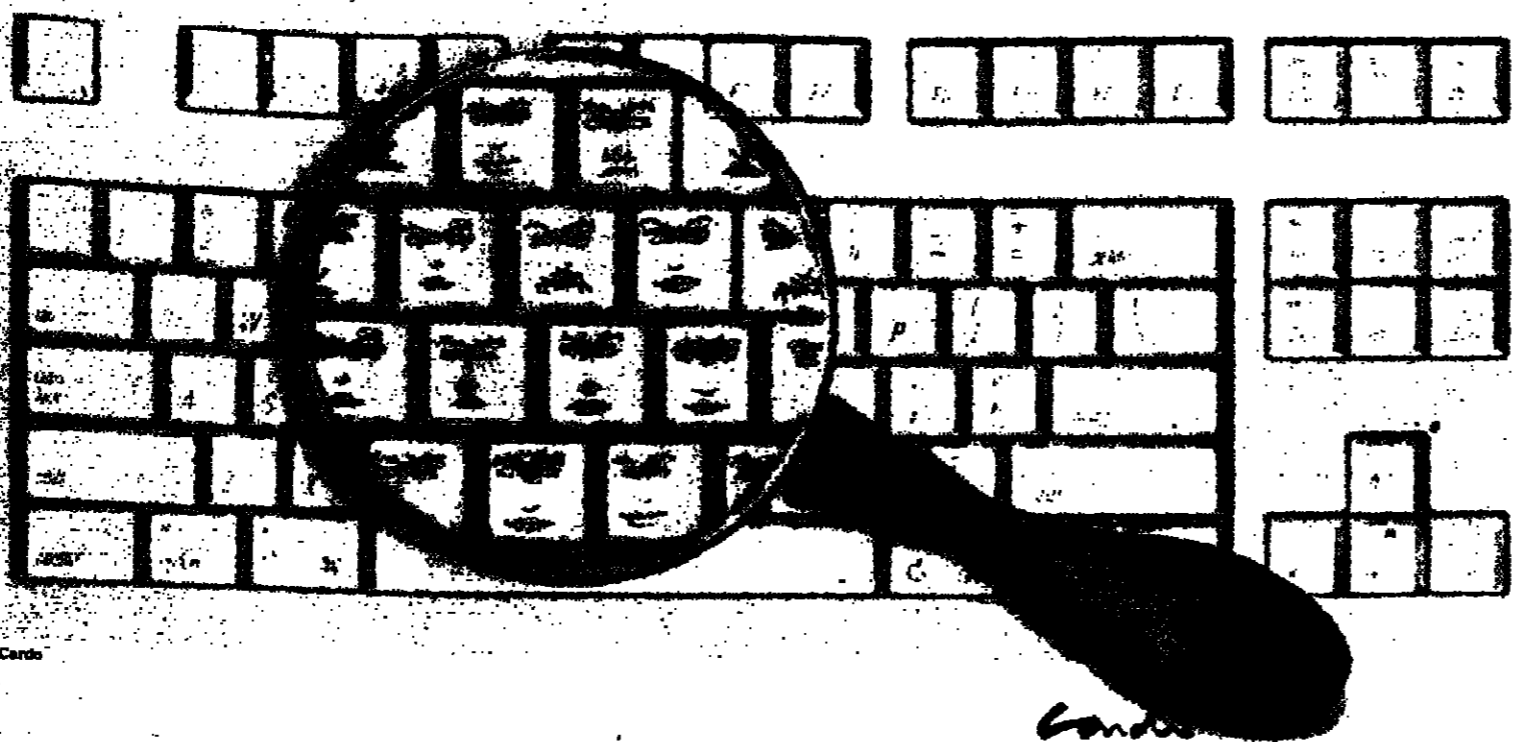
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A Religion of Special Effects

By David Gelernter

Thirty-nine people killed themselves in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif., last week. Did the Internet have something to do with it? The cultists ran a Web-page design business. They may have lured for new members by sending E-mail to likely targets. They believed an alien spaceship was hiding behind the Hale-Bopp comet; they may have got the news over the Net, where rumors spread fast.

This alien spaceship, they decided, would pick them up, but only if they were dead. They took this in stride, and are reported to have been "very upbeat, very outgoing" on the videotape they left behind in lieu of a suicide note.

It is tempting to blame the Internet at least in part, but the Net is no more guilty than the rope industry is when people hang themselves. More likely, the tragedy stems from the fact that as a nation we have never been more confused about good and evil, righteousness and wickedness, God and man. Yet we would always rather blame technology than ourselves.

Some cult pulls in a cosmic signal portending apocalypse, and acts accordingly — it's a sad old story. Until last week, the mass suicides of recent years — the People's Temple in Guyana, the Branch Davidians in Waco, the 74 members of the Order of the Solar Temple — were accomplished with no help from the Web. The Internet, we are told, is a terrifically potent spreader of rumors. Granted, but radio was more potent. (One memorable night in 1938, Orson Welles created widespread panic by broadcasting blow-by-blow reports of an invasion from Mars.)

If technology is to blame, why not blame the movies? It's clear that the cultists got their ideas about alien spaceships from Hollywood. But you

can't really blame the movies. Technology merely highlights and underlines the text it is given. If you look at modern America and then at the Rancho Santa Fe suicides, you cannot help but conclude that this story is about religion, not technology.

Evidently, the cult's goal in recent years was to "overcome" any attachment to money, sex and family life, and to live in a strictly authoritarian community — a re-creation of the poverty, chastity and obedience of Christian holy orders. Its members seemed to reach repeatedly for traditional Christian ideas and come up bare — their souls needed religion but their minds were stocked only with Hollywood junk.

They wanted to talk about their condition as believers, but the term they came up with to describe themselves was "crew members." Life on earth was no good, they held, because it was dominated by "Luciferians" and "space aliens" —

school graduations (1992).

In a recent article in *The Public Interest*, Jeremy Rabkin described a 1995 case in which a Federal appeals court denied parents the right to sue their school system over a ninth-grade sex-education program produced by a company called Hot, Sexy and Safer Productions. The program called for children to blow up condoms and "share with each other" their facial expressions during orgasm. A society where Orgasm Studies are protected in the public schools and the Ten Commandments are forbidden isn't neutral on religion; it is actively against it.

The old-line Protestant denominations are in deep trouble today, and Reform and Conservative Judaism are falling apart. Many of their leaders see their mission in social terms rather than God terms. This religious disintegration was symbolized in an article that ran last year in *The New York Times*, headlined, "One Holiday That Retains Its Meaning." Thanksgiving, it was reported, is "the one day when the perennial love of togetherness and a festive meal still seems fresh."

Practicing Jews and Christians apparently shrugged off this curious report of the death of Christmas, Easter, Passover — the press has been known to get things wrong. Yet the article is almost certainly correct. Among the nation's elite, traditional religion is indeed dead and only Thanksgiving "retains its meaning."

The idea that suppressing religion in the public sphere could actually mean anything or have consequences is, for the average sophisticate, a proposition to snort at. Yet here we are as a nation starved for religion, and the hunger is fiercest at upper social levels, where people set up shop as Web-page designers. The fundamentalist churches are doing fine, but they don't do much business among the technological elite. When the old religions are reeling, people cobble together new ones. In spiritually ignorant times like ours the new ones won't be much good, generally speaking, but people need something.

Environmentalism is a favorite religion nowadays; its leaders are explicit about its spiritual side. You can't display the Ten Commandments in public school these days,

Don't blame the Internet for the cultists' deaths.

Christianity plus a vivid bit of science fiction. The theology tract at their Web site was called "An E.T. Presently Incarnate." This is Christian language — "et incarnatus est" — in the service of Hollywood special effects.

Granted, weird cults (including suicidal ones) have been around for a long time. What is new in today's America is that traditional religion has been suppressed for a generation. Not in the sense that believers are hounded into prison; "suppressed" in the sense that the public domain has been vigorously swept clean of it by judges and opinion leaders who are proud of what they are doing.

A few highlights: the Supreme Court outlawed prayer and Bible reading in the public schools (1962), forbade a public high school to display the Ten Commandments (1980), barred "moments of silence" in the classroom (1987), prohibited nonsectarian prayers at public

but teachers are encouraged to peddle recycling dogma. Environmentalism is not for everyone, though, and it seems likely that the tragedy of Heaven's Gate is the story of spiritually famished people whipping up a religion like island castaways piecing together, in their dire need, a semblance of civilization out of driftwood and spit.

So is the Supreme Court responsible for what happened in Rancho Santa Fe? Of course not. Nor is the American Civil Liberties Union. A person makes his own choices; there are plenty of practicing Jews and Christians today. But there is enough indirect guilt to go around.

For several decades in the middle of this century, the air in many American cities was filthy and made people sick. The smoke-belching factory downtown didn't kill the dying man in the suburbs; it merely added its bit to a mildly poisonous atmosphere that killed the weakest. Today's crusade against religion has done the same sort of thing. Most of us shrug it off. The crusaders keep hitting us, but we can take it. The stronger among us remain Christians and Jews in the old sense, or find satisfaction in America's new secular religions. The weaker join cults. The weakest die.

Washington

The dictator of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew — long known to his American business admirers as Harry Lee — has just fallen on his face in a way that heartens freedom-lovers everywhere.

For decades, Lee has used a corrupt judiciary to repress political opposition to his rule. His lap-dog judges impose crippling libel judgments to silence press criticism of their master.

This year, as usual, the dictator went to the judges with a demand that a Singapore dissident who dared to campaign vigorously be punished for "defamation." The offender raced across the causeway to Malaysia, citing not just the certainty of financial ruin but death threats.

Then Lee blundered. In an affidavit to his lickspittle judges, he hoisted at the opposition politician's ear: "If there is anywhere where people can do him harm," it was the neighboring Malaysian city of Johor, a place Lee called "notorious for shooting, muggings, and car-jackings."

Dictatorial etiquette in Asia permits you to jeer with impunity at "Western values" of freedom and human dignity, but you must never, never suggest imperfection in the country next door.

Malaysia erupted at the insult. "Deeply hurt" was the mildest reaction: one firebrand demanded Singapore's water supply be cut off. Protesters in the (somewhat unsafe) streets denounced Lee, a cunning 73, as "senile" and the Malay Government allowed an even more subversive sentiment to be displayed: "Respect human rights in Singapore."

Lee and his son, the strongman-in-waiting, were forced to apologize for the slur. Their spokesman blamed the mean-spirited press for reporting the prevalence of muggings across the Straits, a condition all believing Singaporeans now realize does not exist.

But it was not diplomatic politesse that dictated the dictator's order to the court to expunge his impolitic testimony. Business is no longer booming; Singapore's electronic exports plummeted last year; employers are finding cheaper land and labor in Malaysia and Indonesia.

This is hardly the moment for Lee to offend his closest neighbor — along with the U.S. — a major trading partner. The Malays have taken sly advantage of the dictator's gaffe by pressing for replacement of the old causeway linking the island with the peninsula by a bridge; that would per-

Essay

WILLIAM SAFIRE

Harry Lee's Slur

MIT ships to bypass the port of Singapore to use Malaysia's Port Klang. What do dictators do when times get tough, or when competition squeezes? They become more repressive, lest economic discontents spawn political challenge. And to keep power in the family, they bait foreign purveyors of individual rights.

That's why the "Singapore model"

Comeuppance to Singapore's boss.

The same American business executives who like doing business in ultra-ordinary Singapore are eager to build up China as an authoritarian superpower. Example: Maurice Greenberg, the insurance tycoon who led the Nixon Center's recent obeisance to Lee Kuan Yew is on the board of advisers to China's Citic; that's the military-industrial empire whose shining light and leading arms dealer, Wang Jun, was ushered by an Asian agent of influence into the White House to be greeted by the U.S. President.

Harry Lee, the man these misguided Americans think of as their friend, must be transfixed by this summer's takeover of Hong Kong by China. He realizes that China will permit no serious competition from Singapore as Southeast Asia's main connection to the West. As a realist, Lee is positioning his island to be a pilot fish to China's whale.

That's why his house organ, *The Straits Times*, joins Al Gore in minimizing Beijing's sinister intervention in U.S. elections. "The powerful expect to be courted," opined Lee's mouthpiece (which, in a fit of perversity, may run this column, festooned with apologetic rebuttals). "The Clinton Administration will not find it easy to get the Republican and media monkeys off its back."

Harry Lee, his U.S. business friends, China's despots and nepots, and Nixon-Clinton Sinophiles make strange bedfellows. Fortunately for freedom, an equally motley opposition is beginning to take shape.

David Gelernter, a professor of computer science at Yale and an adjunct fellow at the Manhattan Institute, is the author of "1939: The Lost World of the Fair" and the forthcoming "Drawing Life: Good, Evil and Mail Bombs in Modern America."

Journal
FRANK RICH

The Suicides Next Door

Last stop, suburbia.

In some particulars another casebook cult scenario to be measured against Jonestown or Waco. Yet it seems even more disturbing because it lacks those apocalypses' dusty scruffiness and violent mad-dog flameouts. Here was a mass suicide suitable for Better Homes and Gardens.

The Heaven's Gate folk killed themselves in the sort of palatial suburban villa, complete with tennis court and swimming pool, that has defined the American dream from Will Kidder's postwar day to our own. They were not unemployable headbeats but successful practitioners of the most exalted and lucrative new American profession — computer geek. They lived inconspicuously in not one but two of our most desirable neighborhoods: Rancho Santa Fe and cyber-space, both virgin venues for wholesale death. They died not with their boots on but in immaculately new Nike running shoes our kids would pray for. They cleaned up after one another, leaving the death scene so spic and span it could be used in a TV commercial testifying to the prowess of household cleansers.

In keeping with this picture of fastidious suburban affluence, the cult's leader, Marshall Applewhite, was not a volcanic Koresh or Manson or Jones

but a smooth-talking, professorial film-flam man like Oz's Professor Marvel — albeit a Marvel for a media-savvy age. Mr. Applewhite trained, appropriately enough, in the performing arts. He was in "Oklahoma!" and "South Pacific" at college and later had a career as both a church choir director and a singer with the Houston Grand Opera. He publicized his cult through books, interviews with national magazines, a USA Today ad and a public-access cable TV show before joining much of America on line. While his considerable video and cyber trails of pronouncements may now, with hindsight, strike us as utterly mad, they failed to attract much attention, let alone suspicion, right up until he staged his doomsday.

After the corpses were found, the San Diego County Sheriff, Bill Koller, said that there may never be an answer to "the question that's on everybody's mind: Why did they do this?" In "The Young Man From Atlanta," the *Kidders* can't readily answer that question about their smart and seemingly content son's suicide either, any more than they can know whether the young man offering them prayers is an apostle or a bush-league Applewhite. But in the best country in the world it is hard to accept any troubling questions as unanswerable, especially when tragedy unfolds in a setting that fits our contented self-image of unstoppable economic progress and sunlit domestic bliss. We want to dismiss nightmares like this as the kind of distant, alien catastrophe that cannot happen here — but we're not in Jonestown anymore.

Historical Creations

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FILM

'The Devil's Own': Disaster? Was There Really a Disaster?

By IAN FISHER

EVEN ALAN J. PAKULA, the veteran director who has seen his share of hard times on movie sets, does not shy away from the word "disaster" to describe some aspects of filming "The Devil's Own" last year.

Brad Pitt, one of the two stars, threatened to quit early in the shoot, complaining that the script was incomplete and incoherent. He later denounced the movie as "the most irresponsible bit of film making — if you can even call it that — that I've ever seen."

The co-star, Harrison Ford, kept his mouth shut at the time but said recently that there was little that he would disagree with in Mr. Pitt's criticisms. Ego clashes, budget overruns and long delays plagued the project.

Every few years, Hollywood produces a movie that months before its release is labeled the next "Ishtar," "Bonfire of the Vanities" or "Heaven's Gate." Usually the same factors are present — big stars, a big-name director, big money and big, last-minute rewrites, all colliding like cars in a freeway pileup.

"The Devil's Own," which opened on Wednesday, had all those elements. And yet, judging from the early reviews, it has avoided joining Hollywood's pantheon of debacles. Even Weekly Variety said that the movie, "a well-crafted suspense, bears no signs of the much-reported on-set difficulties." The film tells the story of a New York City police officer (Mr. Ford) who takes into his family's home a young man (Mr. Pitt) who turns out to be a fugitive Irish Republican Army soldier.

Hollywood has a long tradition of being able to redeem the most troubled shoots with good, and occasionally great, movies. "Casablanca" and "The Godfather" are two prominent examples.

Still, Mr. Pakula does not seem eager to repeat the experience of "The Devil's Own."

"I can't imagine what it would have been like if it had been my first film," he said in his Manhattan office, recounting the stream of negative stories that appeared last year in both the Hollywood trade papers and the mainstream press during the shoot's six long months.

All the same, for Mr. Pakula, the generally positive reviews offer some vindication, suggesting that perhaps things were not as bad as they seemed. He was quick to point out that other films he had made had not exactly gone smoothly either: Jane Fonda tried to quit his second movie, the 1971 film "Kluge," and in

vidual plot things might have changed. It was always telling the same story."

The ripest bit of gossip from the set — personal animosity between the stars over whether this would be a Brad Pitt film or a Harrison Ford film — was not true, Mr. Pakula said, despite many press reports that the two actors were not on speaking terms for months.

In recent interviews, both Mr. Pitt, who at 33 has become a big box-office draw, and Mr. Ford, at 54 an aging star who is nonetheless at the top of his game, said there had been no personal conflicts between them. ("It wasn't the clash of the titans the press made it out to be," said a crew member, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "After all, you were dealing with two guys who probably wouldn't have had much in common under ordinary circumstances.")

No one griped about the size of trailers or the number of close-ups, Mr. Pakula said; rather, the conflicts were artistic. Because Mr. Pitt and Mr. Ford are both stars, the original script had to be rewritten to create a more complicated relationship between the two men, and specifically to create a fuller role for Mr. Ford's character, a good-hearted Irish-American street sergeant named Tom O'Meara.

Mr. Pakula said there was also a secondary problem, derived from the fact that the film's plot did not fall along conventionally simple Hollywood lines. The characters played by Mr. Ford and Mr. Pitt are both "good guys" according to their own distinct moral codes: Mr. Ford as the upright American cop who deplores violence and Mr. Pitt as an I.R.A. gunman for whom violence is a reasonable solution to his people's 300 years of troubles.

But the story requires a conflict between the two men, and one of them has to die, even though there are few film stars in leading roles who relish being rubbed out.

"In American film there is a good guy and a bad guy," Mr. Pakula said. "It's the first thing my grandson always asks: Who's the good guy and who's the bad guy? When I say Harrison Ford and Brad Pitt are both good guys, that throws him."

"What's interesting to me is what happens when people with two different senses of what is right and what is wrong meet," he added. "What's interesting is the fact that these two men can love and respect each other. It makes it more complicated. Much more interesting and much more human."

But Mr. Pitt worried that his role might devolve into that of a traditional bad guy pursued by Mr. Ford, à la "The Fugitive." Mr. Pakula said this



Harrison Ford, left, plays a police officer and Brad Pitt an I.R.A. gunman in "The Devil's Own" — From the troubles in Ireland to trouble on the set.

wrote "Tombstone" and "Glory." About five years ago, the producer Lawrence Gordon, whose earlier projects include "Field of Dreams," "48 Hours" and "Waterworld," the Kevin Costner film memorable largely for having been wildly over budget, took the script to Brad Pitt, who was not yet a household name.

THE PROJECT LANGUISHED until 1995, when Mr. Pitt suggested taking the script to Mr. Ford. To many people's surprise, Mr. Ford accepted, even though O'Meara was originally conceived more as a character role, an emotional backdrop to Mr. Pitt. Mr. Ford suggested Mr. Pakula — the two had worked together in "Presumed Innocent" in 1990 — and filming started last February, in the midst of an unusually harsh winter in New York.

Trouble began immediately, because the script was still in flux. This is what prompted Mr. Pitt's comment to Newsweek about how "irresponsible" it was to be going ahead with the movie at that point.

The comment was considered a major blow to the picture's potential for success. But no one has really disagreed with him.

"We were all a bit unhinged by the failure to come up with more of a script," Mr. Ford said in a recent telephone interview. "So I didn't have any dispute with him over the accuracy of the comments."

Mr. Ford acknowledged, however, that the comments put a certain spin on the publicity: "At least you know what the first few questions will be," he said. And while he said he was satisfied by the final product, he did not give it an unqualified endorsement. "I make them; you decide if you like them," he said. "I'm pleased with a great deal of work in this film, but I'm not really, really happy. I'm a perfectionist. I suppose. So I am denied the pleasure."

At a recent press conference for the movie, Mr. Pitt made it clear that he had made his comments at the very outset of the filming, long before any part of the production was finished. "I have to be honest about what I said, even though it didn't do anyone any good," he said. He added, "How can we start a film when we don't have it all lined up?"

Several script doctors were brought in to address the problems, which delayed the picture, pushed up the budget and only added to tensions on the set. Mr. Gordon, the producer,

would not say what the film finally cost, but he disputed numbers widely reported in Hollywood trade papers. He said the original budget was "much higher" than the reported \$50 million and that the final cost was lower than \$90 million. "I won't say much lower but lower."

"There is no secret that we were writing and shooting" at the same time, Mr. Gordon said. "That's a very unpleasant approach to film making. You just slog through it. It's like being in the infantry and fighting in the rain and snow."

He added, however, that things could have been much worse. "I'm

coming off 'Waterworld,'" he said. "For me, you know, it was not that tough."

Still not finished two months before it opened, "The Devil's Own" required unusual last-minute tweaking. Mr. Pakula had been unhappy with the final scene, a showdown on a boat with a cargo of Stinger missiles that Mr. Pitt's character is trying to sail back to Ireland. According to the director, the original scene, shot in Greenport, L.I., felt truncated, so it was rewritten and reshot over two days in a studio in California early last month.

The aim was largely to complete the relationship between the two men, which again reinforced the idea, Mr. Pakula said, that "these two men still respect and care about each other and recognize that they are basically two good men." Mr. Pakula added a line of dialogue for Mr. Pitt, echoing a line from earlier in the film, to explain his path of destruction in New York: "It's not an American story. It's an Irish one."

"That is what the film was," the director said. "Sometimes it takes longer to get there, and sometimes you get there in a shorter time." □

Alan Pakula, director of "The Devil's Own," which opened last week.

"All the President's Men" (1976), Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman would often, separately, call their real-life reporter counterparts, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, to decide how a certain scene should be played.

"There's rewriting, and there's rewriting," said Mr. Pakula, who will be 69 next month and who, with his white beard and conservative blazers, looks and speaks like an English professor who happens to have a connection to Hollywood. "There's rewriting when you start to make one kind of movie and then everybody panics, or the studio panics and you wind up making another. That was never the case here. How to tell the story might have changed; indi-

was never his intention. To find an analogy, he went back to the 1948 western "Red River," in which a weathered rancher, John Wayne, is defied by his young protégé, Montgomery Clift, on an epic cattle drive from Texas to Missouri.

In "Red River," all turns out well when the tart-talking woman (Joanne Dru) separating the men reminds them that they really love each other. "The whole picture was leading up to something very different," Mr. Pakula said. But the studio executives "just felt it was too unconventional, too dangerous, to have one great star kill another star."

The final showdown of "The Devil's Own" was a central part of the original script by Kevin Jarre, who



Alan Pakula, left, with Harrison Ford, center, and Brad Pitt on the New York set of "The Devil's Own."

PARADOX

BY ELIZABETH C. GORSKI / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

A crossword puzzle grid with numbered squares and a list of clues for both across and down words.

A list of crossword puzzle answers corresponding to the clues, including words like 'checked', 'night light', 'April honoree', etc.

Beyond hatred

How do you prosecute tens of thousands of murderers, among them, eight-year-old children? That is one challenge facing Rwanda's deputy justice minister, who was in Israel recently to learn how to rebuild a society after genocide, Judith Sudilovsky reports

Gerald Gahima has an impossible job. After decades of living in exile in refugee camps, Gahima is now in charge of prosecuting the murderers of an estimated million people, among them, members of his own family.

Gahima, 41, is the deputy justice minister of Rwanda. He was in Israel recently to meet with members of the Simon Wiesenthal Center to learn how to bring war criminals to justice, rehabilitate survivors and commemorate a genocide. The meetings are to be included in a BBC documentary on historical traumas and the pursuit of justice. The documentary links the attempt to bring about justice in Rwanda to Israel's continual hunt for Nazi war criminals.

"It is very difficult to take a purely professional attitude," said Gahima. "So what we do is remind ourselves that what these people did is so bad that something must be done and we are doing something positive by bringing them to justice. But it is not easy. If anyone says they can deal with genocide and be removed from it, they are not giving you an honest answer."

In three months in the spring of 1994, as many as one million people, according to some estimates, were slaughtered in Rwanda as years of animosity between the Tutsi and Hutu tribes was unleashed across the country. Whole villages participated in the genocide against the Tutsi; husbands killed wives and parents killed children.

Thousands more civilians, mostly Hutu, were later killed in a civil war, as the minority Tutsi fought for control.

For Gahima, it is not only important to see what legal actions have been taken against the Nazis over the years - the fact that relatively few Nazi leaders have been brought to trial gives him little hope of trying the top leaders of the Rwandan massacre.

But there are other things he hopes to learn from Israel.

"One thing which was helpful for me was seeing how the whole notion of remembrance is treated [in Israel]: how for a society which has been through an period like the Holocaust it is important to keep alive the memory of what happened as a deterrent to similar

occurrences in the future," said Gahima.

"It is very important that what happened be known and be

happen in their own country far away from their tormentors, the Rwandan victims and their murderers are now living in the same

Holocaust, but it was a genocide which could have been stopped. It was a low-tech genocide. Hundreds of people were killed who should not have been killed," said Zuroff. Unlike the Nazis who built elaborate death factories, the slaughter in Rwanda was done with simple instruments like knives and hatchets, Zuroff said, and could have easily been halted had the UN not withdrawn its troops.

Gahima acknowledges that his is a "very difficult" job.

"On the one hand we have to manage a society emerging from indescribable violence which is still very deeply traumatized, and on the other hand we have to try to stabilize our country and bring things back to normal," he said. "We can't bring about stability until we have confronted the issue of justice and accountability and people who are responsible for the crimes are punished."

Gahima notes that so many people took part in the massacres that realistically they can't all be brought to justice.

He estimates some two million people committed atrocities in those three months. "Our policy has to be punishment of at least some of the people. If there is no punishment then it will be like the past when they killed and got away with it," he said.

The 1994 murders, said Gahima, were just the last in a long line of violence between the two groups - which he describes as more like social classes than tribes - dating back over 30 years.

Some 90,000 people are in Rwandan prisons, but just as with the Nazis, the top leaders fled abroad, so those going on trial in Rwanda are mainly the mid-level leadership, said Gahima.

Although there is an international UN tribunal charged with trying the men who escaped, Gahima is not very optimistic about justice being served; he has but to look at the reality of the Nazis who have managed to evade capture for over 50 years, he said.

Indeed, the BBC recently aired a report criticizing the UN international tribunal for inefficiency in trying Rwandan perpetrators of genocide.

"There are still Nazis all over



Rwandan Deputy Justice Minister Gerald Gahima: If anyone says he can deal with genocide and not be removed from it, he is not giving you an honest answer. (Sarit Uzile)



The many faces of genocide: A delegate from a women's conference views a genocide memorial in Kigali, Rwanda. (Reuters)

land, must face each other every day, noted Efraim Zuroff, director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Israel. Zuroff met with Gahima here and also went to Rwanda in 1995 for a meeting of experts dealing with the aftermath of genocides. They must come to terms with their recent bloody history and learn how to go on from there, he said.

"It was a planned genocide and in that respect it was similar to the

remembered if we are to prevent it from happening again," he added.

"Reconciliation will be a long process but we can't have mutual harmony just by forgetting what happened."

"In trying to reconcile, we must first be able to admit what happened. We can't ask people to forgive your crimes if you can't admit to your crimes."

In contrast to the Jews after the Holocaust who were able to find a

world who have not been brought to justice," said Gahima. "There should be no illusions that we will be able to bring these people [in Rwanda] to justice in a short time."

In the meantime, Gahima has instigated a national confession program whereby if a person confesses to his crimes he will be

given a shorter prison sentence. Children as young as eight are in prison for murder, he said, but up to the age of 14 they will not be punished with incarceration but will be turned over to the social-welfare system which will try to reintegrate them into society, said Gahima.

Still, he said, the hatred which

was infused into the psyche of these people will remain for countless years to come. "There is very little you can do to change the values of a society overnight," he said.

"They will still have that hatred, but hopefully there will not be a government that will capitalize on such hatred and exploit it."

EARTHLY CONCERNS

By D'VORA BEN SHAIL

At long last something may be done about the country's salt problem, in particular the excessive use of salt at slaughter facilities, which is all in the name of keeping the food kosher.

With its increasing population, Israel suffers from a chronic water shortage. And the problem is being exacerbated by intensified agricultural and industrial demand for water. One of the most efficient means of saving limited fresh water supplies is to use reclaimed

sewage water for agricultural and industrial purposes. But there is a snag. Many of the effluents that should be reclaimed and recycled for this purpose are too salty to use, even after basic purification.

The reason for this is that Israel uses between two and three times as much ordinary salt (sodium chloride) per capita as other industrialized nations. This is because extremely large amounts of salt are used to kasher meat products - all meat and fowl slaughtered in Israel undergo this process, whereas the bulk of our beef is imported.

Each year Israel processes approximately 170,000 tons of turkey and chicken (plus a few ducks and geese) and uses about 280 grams of salt per kilogram of fowl for kashering.

This, experts at the Ministry of the Environment say, is excessive. In the United States, where even local rules for kashrut are used, the amount of salt is only 90-95 grams per kilogram of fowl. The reason for this difference, says the ministry, is a lack of education of the workers and their supervisors, and a lack of proper equipment in the slaughterhouses.

One of the major problems is that the slaughtered fowl are treated while wet and since the process of kashering demands that a layer of visible salt coat the carcass, two-thirds of the applied salt runs off as salty water before the salt begins to stick and coat the animal. In the US the freshly slaughtered fowl are first dried off with air blowers and then salted.

There is no halachic ban on this practice; the slaughterhouses simply lack the equipment to do this.

Another factor concerns the amount of salt that remains inside the slaugh-

terhouse and the amount that is sluiced into the sewerage channels when the fowl is washed with clean water. By transporting the fowl belly down over a tray most of the loose salt can be shaken off before the sluicing. Here again, the primary need is for proper equipment. But the amount of salt that remains in internal vats can be recycled to make sodium hydroxide (NaOH), known as caustic soda, for industrial use.

The slaughterhouses need help in obtaining the equipment and the technology to make this conversion which

provides additional income.

But, happily, it seems that the facilities have actually applied themselves and that the amount of salt sent out into the environment is, today, less than 10 percent of what was emitted in the past.

By a carefully instituted system of government-funded grants the ministry says that it can solve this problem within two years and thereby release tens of thousands of previously unusable sewage water for use in agriculture and industry. And it can do this without any conflict with the rabbinical authorities who supervise kashrut.

The slaughter of fowl is fouling up our water

PM
Continued from Page 1

ity apparatus to provoke the Arab community into a violent response," said Itaitawi.

Ramallah and Bethlehem were the centers of protest in the territories, as hundreds of Palestinians clashed with soldiers at the Arak junction south of Ramallah and the area surrounding Rachel's Tomb outside Bethlehem.

A serious confrontation was averted in Nablus, when a mob said to number some 3,000 moved toward a heavily reinforced Joseph's Tomb. With paratroopers surrounding the city and tanks prepared to move in if necessary, lines of Palestinian policemen locked arms to block their way. They turned back only when officers fired into the air.

Rachel's Tomb was littered with stones, iron bars, and garbage, and roads leading to it were blocked with makeshift barricades. Throughout the day, soldiers and police dodged stones and fired rubber bullets and tear gas.

By afternoon, it had become a spectator sport, with residents watching the cat-and-mouse confrontations from easy chairs on their terraces. One man pulled out his car seats and placed them on a stone wall to get a better, more comfortable view of the riots.

"I have to say that, in most places, the Palestinian Police made great efforts to deal with the incidents," Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said. "There

are places where did more, places where they did less, and places where they didn't do at all."

Unofficial Palestinian figures put the number of wounded around the West Bank at about 50, mostly from rubber bullets and tear gas, with one man seriously wounded by a live bullet in Silat al-Harithiyeh near Jenin.

In Gaza, attempts by youths to attack Netzarim and Kfar Darom with stones were broken up in minutes by Palestinian policemen firing in the air, in coordination with the IDF. There was a peaceful march in Gaza City led by PA

officials arm in arm with Hamas noables.

"This is a clear message to Israel that the Palestinian people are united against Israel's policy on settlements and Judaizing Jerusalem," Hamas spokesman Mahmoud Zahar told reporters.

The death of a student in a riot at the south Ramallah checkpoint on Saturday was also thought likely to raise the temperatures of the protests. Abdullah Salah was buried yesterday morning after his family postponed the funeral suddenly Saturday night, when thousands were already by the

graveyard, a mourner said.

Scattered incidents took place in and around Jerusalem, with reports of minor injuries and damage. In Shusfat, a border policeman was slightly wounded in the leg, when dozens of rioters threw stones and bottles at Jewish drivers and security forces. Three youths were wounded by rubber bullets fired by a Border Police patrol while dispersing the rioters and one stone-thrower was arrested.

Hillel Kuntler, David Rudge, Jon Immanuel, Arieh O'Sullivan, and Elli Wohlgelester contributed to this report.

UPROAR

Continued from Page 1

"The prime minister is shocked by the matter of the Ethiopian soldier," a statement issued by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's spokesman said. "The prime minister has asked that the matter be carefully examined again."

Burg expressed shock and disgust over Valitzkin's behavior, telling a meeting of the agency's executive yesterday the officer's "perverse behavior stains us all horribly."

CONVERSION

Continued from Page 1

has given the attorney-general until April 30 to reply to a petition to recognize a number of Conservative conversions of adopted children. The Knesset goes into recess at the end of this week and will not reconvene until May.

Lubotzky has met with coalition leaders to present his proposal that all converts be registered as

Jews on their identity cards, while the Interior Ministry's Population Registry would record the type of conversion. However, the religious parties refused to postpone the vote.

The Third Way decided to vote against the bill if it comes up today.

The Conservative and Reform movements are to hold a demonstration and prayer meeting opposite the Knesset this afternoon in opposition to the passage of the bill.

book department

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ARUTZEI ZAHAV (Sharon area) Community TV, Channel 45.

Israel Under-21s batter Luxembourg 5-0

By DEREK FATTAL
Israel's Under-21 soccer side showed their elders the way forward last night...

Moment of truth for Israel

By DEREK FATTAL and ORI LEWIS
Israel take on Luxembourg this evening in a virtual do-or-die soccer World Cup group 5 qualifier...

Anything less than a win will all but end Israel's hopes at competing alongside the world's elite sides for the first time since Mexico '70.

After arriving in the Duchy on Friday, coach Shlomo Scharf's men continued their preparations for today's game over the weekend.

The form book suggests that Israel should have no difficulty garnering three points against a team traditionally regarded as one of Europe's weakest...

Nevertheless, Luxembourg proved extremely difficult to break down when Israel notched up an unimpressive 1-0 victory on home turf back in December.

Israel continues to suffer from a lack of true firepower up front in the absence of Ronen Harazi...

SCOREBOARD

NBA - Results on Saturday: Atlanta 88, Sacramento 74; Washington 94, Dallas 87; Chicago 111, New Jersey 101; Houston 126, Denver 105; Utah 115, San Antonio 102.

CRICKET - West Indies, trailing by 21 runs on the first innings, were 30 for two in their second innings at tea on the third day of the third Test against India in Bridgetown, Barbados yesterday.

Kentucky to face Arizona in all-Wildcats title game

Defending NCAA champion downs Minnesota 78-69
Arizona beats North Carolina 66-58

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) - This much is certain about tonight's NCAA title game: The Wildcats will win.

The Wildcats will lose, too, when defending champion Kentucky plays Arizona.

deal with Kentucky's press, which helped produce a 78-69 win over Minnesota in the second semifinal.

"You've got to handle that game-long, full-court pressure," Olson said.

NCAA on TV
The final will be shown live on NBC tomorrow at 4:30 a.m.

"We've got to be ready for a great Arizona team," Kentucky coach Rick Pitino said.

"They are young players with no fear at all. We have our hands full with the quickest team I've seen in some time."

Herzliya halfway to safety

Relegation destiny in own hands as Hap. TA must sit and wait

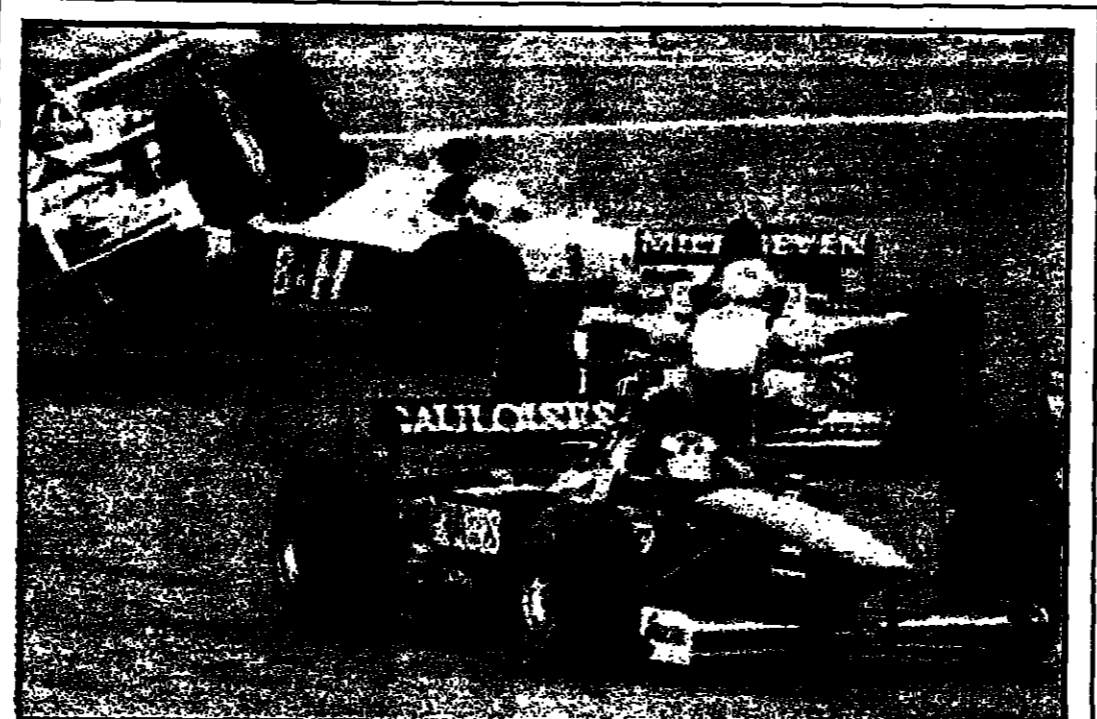
By ELI GRONER
Bnei Herzliya completed the first stage of its two-part mission in National Basketball League action last night...

Terrence Stansbury gave one of his best performances of the year tallying 32 points, while abusing the overmatched Assaf Dotan.

Despite the victory, coach Muki Katzurin maintained that "Our work is only half done."

In other action, Maccabi Ramat Gan assured its place in the league with a win over Maccabi Rishon while Maccabi Tel Aviv rolled over Hapoel Holon.

Table with 3 columns: Team, W, L, Pts. Lists basketball team stats including Maccabi Tel Aviv, Hapoel Eilat, Hapoel Jerusalem, etc.



Pileup in Brazil
Damon Hill's Arrows (left) is hit at the first turn after the start of the Brazilian Grand Prix in Sao Paulo yesterday.

Anti-Israel protesters force abandonment of Netherlands-Canada match

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) - About 500 Muslim men and women invaded a ground where they mistakenly thought Israel's cricketers were playing a match...

Davis Cuppers leave for Slovakia

Israel's men's tennis team flies to Bratislava today to begin their 1997 Davis Cup campaign with a match against Slovakia.

Vancouver beats Calgary, moves closer to playoffs

CALGARY (Reuter) - Trevor Linden scored for the first time in nearly a month to cap a three-goal first period and Kirk McLean stopped 28 shots as the Vancouver Canucks defeated the Calgary Flames 5-2, on Saturday.

Real Estate & Investments in Israel 1997
Just before Pessach The Jerusalem Post will publish special supplements devoted to real estate and investments in Israel.

CLASSIFIEDS
RATES, DWELLINGS, SITUATIONS VACANT, OFFICE STAFF, VEHICLES, and other classified advertisements.

Nimrodi to sue Channel 2 News

By RAINE MARCUS and BATSHEVA TSUR

Ma'ariv publisher Ofer Nimrodi intends to sue Channel 2 News and the daily's former reporter Erez Rotem. This follows broadcasts on Friday and Saturday that he was behind efforts to appoint his lawyer Dan Avi-Yitzhak as justice minister and subsequently attorney-general.

Rotem gave evidence to State Attorney Edna Arbel allegedly implicating Nimrodi and Avi-Yitzhak in the Bar-On Affair. He also accused Nimrodi (currently on trial in the media wiretapping case) of pushing his lawyer to become justice minister or attorney-general so that he might be granted a pardon or plea bargain.

When this did not work, said Rotem in his evidence, Nimrodi and Avi Yitzhak leaked the Bar-On for Hebron story to Channel 1.

Nimrodi has emphatically denied the allegations.

The State Attorney's Office refused to comment on whether it had received testimony about Nimrodi's possible involvement.

Rotem, who was originally **Ma'ariv's** court reporter, before he began covering the security beat, was known as being close to Nimrodi. **Ma'ariv** reported yesterday that Rotem had been fired, but other sources said that he left after an argument and the circumstances were unclear. Attempts were made to persuade Rotem to remain,

said a source.

Meanwhile, police investigating the Bar-On Affair and officials at the Internal Security Ministry and Prime Minister's Office have known about the allegations for some time. Rotem's evidence may force police to probe new aspects of the complicated affair.

In a related development, Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi yesterday left for a week's vacation skiing in Europe. The vacation was planned well in advance, the ministry said last night, denying reports that Hanegbi wanted to ease the situation in the ministry where crucial decisions on the Bar-On Affair are now being made.

Hanegbi was questioned several times under caution in connection with the affair. There has been public pressure for him to take a leave of absence until the conclusions of the investigating team have been published.

Meanwhile, the police team met with the legal experts at Neveh Ilan in the Jerusalem Corridor for the third time in a week. They were joined by Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein who, together with Arbel, will make the final decision on whether or not to present indictments.

"This is close to the last meeting. We have a few more things to iron out," Arbel said after the meeting.

"It is a very delicate matter and we have to be careful, so we are taking our time," Rubinstein added.

Theater plays down fictional link to Barak

By HELEN KAYE

Beit Lessin theater general manager Tzippi Pines yesterday dismissed as a "pack of lies" an article that appeared in the Hebrew press which reported MK Ehud Barak as the inspiration for the hero of **Arafel** (fog), a docudrama by Matti Golan.

Arafel, which will open between June 1 and 15, traces the investigation into a fatal accident at a training base called "Ge'ulim," whose commanding officer is named "Sela." It is based on the 1992 incident at Tze'elim in which six soldiers were killed and seven injured by a missile fired during a training exercise. Barak was chief of general staff at the time.

According to the *Yediot Aharanot* article, the Barak camp is alleged to have been furious, saying that the substance and timing of the play are politically motivated to discredit Barak, who is running for leadership of the Labor Party.

"Absolute rubbish," said Pines firmly. "I liked the play ... and I didn't even think of political consequences."

Golan maintained that he conceived the play "long before the defeat of the Labor Party in the last election and long before Ehud Barak threw his hat in the ring."

Barak spokesman Avivim Balzar reiterated that there is no intention to prevent production of the play.



Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau (left) helps bake 'shmura' matza for Pessah in Bnei Brak yesterday. (Ilan Osendryver/Israel Sun)

Clalit threatens to take Treasury to court

By JUDY SIEGEL

Kupat Holim Clalit is considering the possibility of petitioning the High Court of Justice over the Treasury's failure to reimburse it for the growing costs of services it must supply under the two-year-old National Health Insurance Law. Clalit chairman Prof. Dan Michaeli and deputy director-general for finance Ze'ev Warmbrand told reporters yesterday that last year's

total deficit for all the health funds was NIS 800 million, which will grow by an additional NIS 1.2 billion this year. When the health insurance law went into effect, Clalit had a balanced budget, and Maccabi, Leumi, and Meuhedet were only NIS 200 million in the red.

Meanwhile, Clalit's board of directors last night chose Dr. Yitzhak Peterburg, director-general of Soroka Hospital in Beersheba, as its new director-general.

Michaeli and Warmbrand faulted the Treasury, which authorizes the signing of labor agreements that commit them to higher wages and better working conditions for staff; raising the cost of hospitalization, while not increasing health funds' share of income; failing to cover the real costs of geriatric care; giving the elderly a discount on medications; cancelling the employers' tax that went exclusively to the health funds; and adding new drugs

and treatments without supplying extra funds to cover them.

Michaeli and Warmbrand said that in the past, the only way Clalit has succeeded in getting funds it deserved from the Treasury was by going to court.

Clalit will demand that both hospitalization costs and the insurers' compensation from health taxes be updated at a uniform rate, and that the basket of health services be kept at a steady level without erosion.

Appel demands documents from Channel 1

By RAINE MARCUS

Businessman David Appel, currently suing Channel 1 for NIS 5 million for implicating him in the Bar-On Affair, yesterday petitioned Tel Aviv District Court to order relevant documents and tapes handed over.

Appel's attorney, Yehuda Ressler, asked the court to order Israel Broadcasting Authority director-general Mordechai Kirschbaum, news director Rafik Halabi, and journalist Ayala

Hasson to disclose documents they said proved their story, which triggered the Bar-On probe.

Ressler said he had sent the three a questionnaire, containing 16 questions, but it was ignored. The questions, which Ressler maintains are relevant to his client's slander suit, include: "How and why did MK Aryeh Deri make his 'Bar-On for Hebron' conditions"; and "who did Channel 1 turn to for confirmation that the story it was about to publish was correct."

WEATHER

Hatza 6-22	Tiberias 8-27
Ahla 7-25	Samaria 6-23
Tel Aviv 9-22	Jerusalem 7-21
Beersheba 6-25	Dimona 15-25
Eilat 12-31	

Forecast: Partly cloudy with a few rain showers.

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Cloud
Berlin	03	08	Cloudy
Buenos Aires	15	20	Cloudy
Caracas	19	26	Cloudy
Chicago	02	08	Cloudy
Copenhagen	05	10	Cloudy
Frankfurt	03	08	Cloudy
Geneva	03	08	Cloudy
Helsinki	-04	01	Cloudy
Hong Kong	20	26	Cloudy
Shanghai	12	18	Cloudy
Tokyo	14	20	Cloudy
London	06	12	Cloudy
Los Angeles	15	24	Cloudy
Moscow	08	14	Cloudy
Mumbai	01	07	Cloudy
New York	-01	02	Cloudy
Paris	05	11	Cloudy
Rome	09	14	Cloudy
Sao Paulo	18	24	Cloudy
Sydney	11	17	Cloudy
Tel Aviv	18	24	Cloudy
Toronto	04	10	Cloudy
Vancouver	08	14	Cloudy
Zurich	05	11	Cloudy

Winning cards

The winning cards in yesterday's Mifal Hapais daily Chance drawing were the ace of spades, 9 of hearts, king of diamonds, and ace of clubs.

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 - Guarantee of abiding by the bid - as detailed in the tender form.
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"YOU WILL FIND NO MORE MOVING ACCOUNT OF WILFUL SELF-DESTRUCTION" Daily Mail

JERUSALEM, Jerusalem Theatre, Rebecca Crown Auditorium: Thur. 27.3.97, 8:30 p.m.; DYLAN THOMAS. Sat. 29.3.97, 8:00 p.m.; TRUMAN CAPOTE. REHOVOT, Eilat Auditorium, Weizmann Institute: Sun. 30.3.97, 8:30 p.m.; DYLAN THOMAS. Kfar Saba, Sapir Auditorium: Mon. 31.3.97, 8:30 p.m.; DYLAN THOMAS. Bet Gabriel at KINNERET: Tues. 1.4.97, 8:30 p.m.; DYLAN THOMAS. BE'ER-SHEVA, Ben-Gurion University, Sonnenfeld Auditorium: Wed. 2.4.97, 8:30 p.m.; TRUMAN CAPOTE. TEL-AVIV, Suzanne Dellal Center: Thur. 3.4.97, 8:30 p.m.; Fri. 4.4.97, 10:00 p.m.; DYLAN THOMAS. Sat. 5.4.97, 5:00 p.m., 9:00 p.m.; TRUMAN CAPOTE. HAIFA, Technion Cinema Hall: Sun. 6.4.97, 6:00 p.m.; DYLAN THOMAS. 9:00 p.m.; TRUMAN CAPOTE.

BOX OFFICES: TEL-AVIV, Suzanne Dellal Center: 03-5105656, Rotokho: 03-3276699, Hadran: 03-5279797, Kestel: 03-6044725, Leor: 03-5247373. HASSARON: 03-5400551/2. JERUSALEM, Jerusalem Theatre: 02-5610011, Bimot: 02-6234061, Kalm: 02-6256869, Bet Gabriel at KINNERET: 06-6751175. Kfar Saba: 09-7649230. REHOVOT: 08-9343307, 08-9467890. HAIFA: Garber 04-8384777, 8292453. BE'ER-SHEVA: Ben-Gurion University, 07-6472340.

BOX OFFICES FOR ISRACARD CAMPAIGN: TEL-AVIV, Suzanne Dellal Center: 03-5105656. JERUSALEM, Jerusalem Theatre: 02-5610011. HAIFA, Garber: 04-8384777. Kfar Saba, REZER SHEVA & REHOVOT, Rotokho: 03-5276699.

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POST

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